

Sailor gets life in killing of cabbie

By ERIK SLAVIN
Stars and Stripes

YOKOHAMA, Japan — U.S. Navy Seaman Olatunbosun Ugbogu will serve life in a Japanese prison with labor for murdering a taxi driver last year, a three-judge panel ruled Thursday in Yokohama District Court.

In finding him guilty, lead judge Masaaki Kawaguchi called Ugbogu's insanity defense "groundless." He ruled that Ugbogu was sane when he stabbed Masaaki Takahashi with a kitchen knife after a roughly \$200 ride from Tokyo's Shinagawa Station to Yokosuka's Shioiri neighborhood on March 19, 2008.

While Ugbogu maintained that voices in his head forced him to kill, Kawaguchi said the killing was part of a planned robbery that failed when Takahashi screamed in pain after the knife pierced his neck and severed a major artery.

"The crime was cold-hearted and cruel ... and committed to get money for socializing," Kawaguchi said. "It was heinous and selfish."

In addition to murder, Ugbogu was found guilty of robbery for not paying the taxi fare and of violating the arms control law.

SEE SENTENCE ON PAGE 2



An amputee walks into a bar...

BILL O'LEARY/The Washington Post

Troops recovering at Walter Reed use humor to help come to terms with loss of limbs

By CHRISTIAN DAVENPORT
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON
He knows they're going to stare. They always stare.

As soon as Pat Murray steps in the elevator, they'll notice his prosthetic leg and maybe accurately surmise that, yes, he is an Iraq war veteran, and, yes, he got blown up. Then the sadness will sink in, the pity, and they'll give him *that look*, which he can sense even if he doesn't see, and it will be an uncomfortable few floors up.

So as Murray approaches the elevator and the woman thrusts her hand between the closing doors for him, he says, "Careful, you can lose a limb that way."

"Oooh," the woman says, noticing Murray's metal leg. She's obviously shocked, unsure of what to say or how to act. Murray flashes a smile, chuckles, and suddenly the ride up isn't nearly so awkward after all.

It's that type of humor — spontaneous (he once asked his doctor when his leg would grow back), cunning (he tells children who ask about his "robot" leg that he didn't eat his vegetables) and, at times,

Pat Murray, left, and Kevin Blanchard, each of whom lost a leg while serving in Iraq, have a drink at Martin's Tavern in Washington.

gruesome (there are stump jokes that can't be printed here) — that helped him come to terms with the fact that his right leg is no more.

It was at Walter Reed Army Medical Center that Murray, who was a Marine corporal, learned not only to walk again, but to laugh. Although doctors and therapists can patch up war's physical wounds, it is often the humor that can heal as well as the best medicine.

"What's an amputee's favorite restaurant?" asked Staff Sgt. Brian Schar, who lost both legs in Iraq in 2007. "IHOP."

SEE HUMOR ON PAGE 3



Monkey seen

Misawa officials warn of wild animal roaming the base

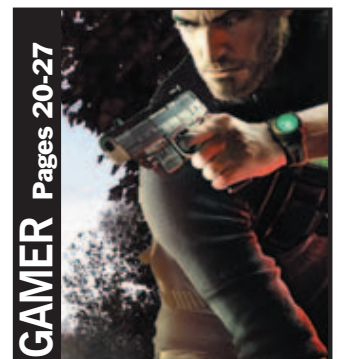
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Driven to win

Regular contender Denny Hamlin wants Sprint Cup crown
Racing Stripes, Page 26



Military considers ban on Twitter, Facebook Page 6



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QUOTE OF THE DAY

**"Neda is alive,
Ahmadinejad is dead."**

—Attendees at a graveside memorial for Neda Agha Soltan, a 27-year-old Iranian music student, whose death during Iran's post-election protests was made famous due to a video of her final moments that circulated on the Internet.

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Monkey on the loose on Misawa

By T.D. FLACK
AND CHIYOMI SUMIDA
Stars and Stripes

MISAWA AIR BASE, Japan — Security forces personnel have received dozens of calls in the last 10 days reporting a 3-foot, 65-pound intruder on the base.

With its gray fur, pink face and, well, pink tush, the Japanese macaque — or snow monkey — isn't too hard to spot. Turns out it's much harder to catch.

Staff Sgt. Scott Ferguson, a flight sergeant with the 35th Security Forces Squadron, said the goal now is to chase the monkey off base — which they did once before.

Japanese officials were alerted, Ferguson said.

A spokesman from Misawa City's Agricultural and Fisheries Division, which oversees the protected species, said the monkey has been spotted frequently in local communities in the past two weeks.

Division spokesman Koji Fukuda said officials believe it's the same monkey. He said that according to the reports, it appeared to be moving north before turning south down into Misawa city and the base.

"He must have been ousted from [his] group," Fukuda said.

The Japanese community has been warned not to approach the wild animal or attempt to feed it, he said.

Ferguson said the same warning goes for base residents. There have been no reported injuries on or off base, and officials want to keep it that way.

Fukuda said it's rare for a monkey to appear in residential areas in Misawa. That last reported case was five or six years ago, he said.

Anyone who sees the monkey should call Security Forces at DSN 226-3600 or 226-4358, Ferguson said.

E-mail T.D. Flack at: flacktd@pstripes.osd.mil



Courtesy of Susan Hinds

A Japanese macaque is seen loose on Misawa Air Base on July 26. Japanese and base security officials have received numerous calls about the animal and warn not to try to approach or feed it.

Sentence: Judges say sailor's apology for slaying was superficial



KYODO NEWS/AP

U.S. sailor Olatunbosun Ugbogu is seen in April 2008. Ugbogu was sentenced Thursday to life in prison in the stabbing death of a Japanese taxi driver, a crime that led to calls for tougher punishment for servicemembers who break the law.

SENTENCE, FROM PAGE 1

Ugbogu, who wore a T-shirt and ripped jeans to the sentencing, reacted to the verdict with the same lack of emotion that has generally characterized him since the trial began in December.

Ugbogu, who has been taking psychiatric medication regularly while being held in jail, did not have the chance to speak Thursday.

A court-appointed psychiatric expert said in April that Ugbogu may have convinced himself that he hears voices in his head following the stabbing in order to cope with the trauma. But he said Ugbogu acted too methodically to have been schizophrenic at the time of the killing.

Judges said Thursday that they accepted the psychiatric expert's finding.

"The verdict rejected all the claims made by the defendant and defense counsel. It is truly regrettable," defense attorney Yasutoshi Murakami said following court Thursday.

Murakami disputed the psychiatrist's findings but wasn't allowed to present his own psychiatric witness during the trial.

Murakami said he believed that if a jury had reviewed the situation, they

would have scrutinized Ugbogu's erratic behavior and possibly come to a different conclusion about his sanity. Jury trials were introduced to the Japanese justice system for the first time in May. The start of Ugbogu's trial preceded that change and his case was heard by the panel of judges.

The judges acknowledged that Ugbogu apologized for his actions, but they later said that the apology was superficial.

"We don't believe the defendant has seriously reflected on what he did," Kawaguchi said.

"This case has had very serious consequences, not only to the Yokosuka base, but to the Japanese people as a whole," Kawaguchi later added.

Ugbogu has 14 days to appeal the decision.

Murakami said he would discuss appeals with his client Friday, but that Ugbogu had expressed earlier his willingness to accept the outcome and move on with his life.

Without an appeal, Ugbogu would be eligible for parole in about 25 to 30 years, Murakami said.

Stars and Stripes reporter Hana Kusumoto contributed to this story.
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U.S. worried about raid on Iranian exile camp

By ERNESTO LONDONO
The Washington Post

BAGHDAD — Violent clashes continued between Iraqi troops and members of an Iranian opposition group whose camp the Iraqis stormed Tuesday, presenting the first major dilemma for the U.S. government since Iraq proclaimed its sovereignty a month ago.

At least eight Iranians have been killed and 400 wounded since Tuesday, when hundreds of Iraqi police and soldiers in riot gear plowed into Camp Ashraf, northeast of Baghdad, using Humvees donated by the U.S. military, according to group leaders and Abdul Nasir al-Mahdawi, the governor of Diyala province.

Camp residents described the day's events as a massacre and the aftermath as a tense stalemate.

Behzad Saffari, a leader of the Mujaheddin-e Khalq, or MEK, said that Iraqi troops were preventing gravely injured people from being taken to hospitals outside the group's camp and that residents feared soldiers would storm their living quarters.

"We have 1,000 women," he said. "This is our main concern now."

The raid, ordered by Prime Minister

Nouri al-Maliki, coincided with an unannounced visit by Defense Secretary Robert Gates, who left Iraq on Wednesday.

In Washington, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton described the raid as a legitimate act by a sovereign nation. "Although the U.S. government remains engaged and concerned about this issue, it is a matter for the government of Iraq to resolve in accordance with its laws," she said.

Clinton said Iraq had given assurances that camp residents would be treated humanely and would not be relocated anywhere they would have a well-founded fear of persecution. She urged the Iraqis to "show restraint."

U.S. officials are deeply concerned about the reports of violence and have been monitoring the situation using camera-equipped unmanned aircraft since Tuesday, said an official who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

"We're asking the Iraqis questions,"



Clinton

the official said. "Sometimes they answer, sometimes they don't."

A contingent of U.S. soldiers based outside Ashraf has been monitoring the situation but has declined to intervene, residents said.

The raid and its aftermath represent a conundrum for U.S. officials. Some say they feel obligated to the MEK because its members have provided information about Iran's nuclear program and because American officials vowed to protect them after the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

But condemning this week's events could be seen as an affront to al-Maliki's government just as U.S. officials are talking up Iraq's sovereignty, proclaimed June 30 when American troops withdrew from cities.

Iraqi government spokesman Ali al-Dabbagh, who put the death toll at seven, denied excessive force was used, according to The Associated Press. He said an investigation had begun into how the Iranians died, and he noted that Iraqis found the bodies of two men shot in the back when they entered the camp.

He claimed they had the word "traitor" in Iran's Farsi language written on their bodies, suggesting they had been killed by members of the group. He said the situa-

tion at the camp was stable Thursday.

The stated goal of the Ashraf operation was to set up an Iraqi police station inside the camp, a move Iraq has described as the first step toward evicting the more than 3,000 residents.

Tehran officials have pressured the Baghdad government for years to expel the MEK, which seeks to overthrow Iran's Islamic regime. But Iraq has held off from raiding the camp because of U.S. opposition to a violent takeover.

An Iraqi police commander who participated in the raid said the Iranians' fierce resistance had startled Iraqi security forces. When the Iraqis gathered outside the gate, throngs of MEK members, led by women, formed a human shield, said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. "They put the women in front to prevent us from entering. They hit us with rocks and knives."

The official said 45 troops were injured. Residents at the camp said they did not provoke the forces.

After nearly four hours, the official said, the Iraqis set up a police station and checkpoints inside the camp and raised an Iraqi flag.

Humor: 'You have to have a sense of humor or you'll lose your mind'

HUMOR, FROM PAGE 1

Yes, the humor can be offensive and galling — burn victims sometimes call one another "crispy," for example. The sphere of people who can get away with telling amputee jokes is tightly defined, and not every wounded warrior is able to joke about having a hard time going up stairs or holding a coffee cup. But for others, it's the ultimate palliative as they move from denial to anger to acceptance.

"You have to have fun with it," said Kevin Blanchard, who lost his left leg while on patrol in Iraq in 2005. "And you can get away with murder, because who's going to yell at an amputee?"

Wounds heal faster when they become a practical joke, a gag. At an amusement park, Blanchard, now a student at George Washington University, removed his leg before getting on a suspended roller coaster where riders' feet dangle freely. As the ride coasted to a stop, he started screaming loud enough for those in line to hear: "Do not get on that ride! It'll rip your legs off!"

Murray says laughter helped him keep his "mind off the fact of what an absolutely horrible situation you are in — how you went from being a big, bad-ass terrorist fighter to having your mother pushing you around in a wheelchair."

It helped that fellow Marines dished it out in the physical therapy room as if they had never left the front lines. He loved how the sad, tragic place could give way so easily to hilarity. How servicemembers called one another "Gimpy" and "Peg-leg" and "one-legged bastard." Those with one arm were known as "Five" for the number of fingers they had left.

On a whim, Murray and a fellow patient, a double amputee, made business cards to pass out to women in bars that read:

2 1 3 Inc.
2 Chumps 1 Leg 3 Stumps
Part Time Human Bomb Detectors
Full Time Lady Killers

It's the ultimate palliative as they move from denial to anger to acceptance.

Professional Cigarette Smokers.

Patients at Walter Reed competed to print up T-shirts that capture the tone of much of the hospital hallway banter: "Buy a Marine. 25-50 percent off. Some assembly required."

And: "Dude, where's my leg?"

And: "I went to Iraq, lost my leg and all I got was this T-shirt."

One had his prosthetic professionally printed: "I did it for the parking."

Schar and some friends created a top 10 list of positive things about being a double amputee: "Your feet don't smell." "You can

wear the same socks for weeks." "You can always wear shorts."

Once, while Schar was wheeling himself up a steep hill, someone asked whether he needed a hand.

"No, man, my hands are good," Schar responded. "Can you give me a couple

of feet?"

When Ryan Kules first got to Walter Reed in 2005, he saw nothing funny about losing his right arm and left leg. The former Army captain was still in agonizing pain, and mourning two buddies killed by the roadside bomb that exploded directly under their Humvee. It took nine months before Kules was finally able to join the joking.

Humor "is coming to terms with the way your body is now, and part of that process is being able to laugh about it and being able to joke around with people who are in similar situations as you," said Kules, of suburban Bowie, Md., who works with the Wounded Warrior Project helping veterans get jobs.

"Unfortunately, there are people who never get to that point," Kules said. "You can make fun of yourself, or not — but that can suddenly lead down a very dark road."

Last fall, Walter Reed staffer Ross Colquhoun, called the "able-bodied freak" by the patients he takes on outdoor expeditions, was with a group of amputees at a store, shopping for supplies for a hunting trip. The patients were, as usual, going at



BILL O'LEARY/The Washington Post

Amputee Kevin Blanchard displays one of his tattoos: a Purple Heart with soldier's boots at the end of a rifle. "You have to have fun with it," said Blanchard, photographed in Martin's Tavern in Washington. "And you can get away with murder, because who's going to yell at an amputee?"

it. Colquhoun called one soldier "gimpy" and threatened to tie another's wheelchair to the van's bumper and drive him home like that.

"Did you hear what that guy just said?" a nearby shopper told his friend. "I can't believe he's talking to them like that. I'm going to kick his butt if he keeps it up."

The shoppers confronted Colquhoun, who explained that yes, the joking was raw, but that's how they communicate. "They were dumbfounded," Colquhoun said.

Army Staff Sgt. Kurtis Dellicker has catalogued his wounds so many times, he

has his shtick down pat.

The left side of his face is paralyzed, "so I won't ever need Botox." And numb. "So I can really take a punch in bar fights." And he's deaf in his left ear, so "I get half off on headphones."

The jokes, delivered deadpan, are his way of saying he has accepted the way he is, has moved on and wishes others would, too.

"That's how I make it through the day, especially here at Walter Reed," Dellicker said. "To be in this place, you have to have a sense of humor or you'll lose your mind."



KARIM KADIM/AP

Bresam Abdulla is helped out of a hospital Thursday after being injured by a roadside bomb in Baghdad.

Bombings flare in Iraq

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Twelve people were killed by bombings in northern and western Iraq on Thursday, including seven in a building used by a Sunni-backed political group in Diyala province, said police.

The violence is a reflection of the deep political and ethnic divisions that remain in Iraq despite the security gains over the past 18 months.

Diyala experienced violence earlier this week when Iraqi security forces and an Iranian opposition group living in a camp in the province engaged in two days of clashes that left seven people dead.

Police in western Iraq, meanwhile, said five people died and 15 were injured when a suicide bomber blew up his vehicle in Qaim, near the border with Syria. A police official said the bomber was targeting a police station but concrete barriers prevented him from reaching it.

"There are many civilians under the rubble. Many houses were destroyed completely, and the police imposed a vehicle and motorcycle ban," he said, requesting anonymity because he was not au-

thorized to speak with the media.

Thursday's first blast hit Baqouba, the provincial seat of Diyala that lies northeast of Baghdad, killing at least seven and wounding 10 people, said Major Ghalib al-Karkhi, a spokesman for the Diyala police. Other police and hospital officials confirmed the toll.

The bomb was hidden inside a building used by the Reform and Development Movement, a Sunni-backed political group founded last year that won four seats in the last provincial council elections.

The bombing came amid heightened tensions in Camp Ashraf, where Iranian exiles belonging to the People's Mujahedeen Organization of Iran clashed with Iraqi police.

The group said hundreds of exiles were wounded and at least seven killed. That claim was initially denied by the Iraqi government, but al-Dabbagh confirmed the death toll Thursday.

"We came to know ... that seven people from Ashraf Camp have been killed. We have around 30 people from our police, they have been injured, some of them are in critical situation," al-Dabbagh told The Associated Press.

said in the first suggestion of a possible pullout of Italian troops.

The premier said Wednesday night that any withdrawal would be agreed on with Italy's international allies.

Berlusconi's comments followed calls from within his own government to bring back Italy's 2,800 troops in Afghanistan. Those calls sparked controversy and Berlusconi was quick to assure allies that Italy would stay the course.

Italy's troops are stationed in the western region of Herat and in Kabul. Rome is also sending an additional 500 troops on temporary deployment ahead of the vote.

A total of 14 Italian troops have been killed in the war, with the latest fatality a soldier who was killed by a roadside bomb earlier this month.

From The Associated Press

Britain launches inquiry into Iraq war participation

By DAVID STRINGER
The Associated Press

LONDON — Britain launched its first sweeping inquiry into the unpopular Iraq war on Thursday — a potentially explosive national reckoning that will call ex-Prime Minister Tony Blair as a witness and seek evidence from former White House staff members.

John Chilcot, an ex-civil servant who is the inquiry chairman, said the study would expose errors in the buildup and tumultuous aftermath of the 2003 U.S.-led invasion. He vowed his panel wouldn't shy from delivering embarrassing truths to key figures in London and Washington.

"If we find that mistakes were made, that there were issues which could have been dealt with better, we will say so frankly," Chilcot told reporters.

But Chilcot's panel — which includes four other officials, including Winston Churchill's biographer and an ex-British ambassador to Russia — will be able only to issue rebukes and recommendations. It is not permitted to establish criminal or civil liability for mistakes.

"The inquiry is not a court of law and nobody is on trial. But I want to make something absolutely clear — the committee will not shy away from making criticism," Chilcot said.

Prime Minister Gordon Brown asked Chilcot to examine the period from the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States through to the withdrawal of British troops from Iraq earlier this month. It will analyze prewar intelligence and postwar decisions on reconstruction.

Bereaved families and anti-war activists have long called for an inquiry to consider Britain's role in a conflict that triggered massive protests at home and left 179 British soldiers dead.

Two previous studies into aspects of Britain's decision to join the U.S.-led Iraq war already have been held, but both were denounced by critics who claimed their conclusions had little effect.

One cleared the government of

blame for the death of David Kelly, a government weapons scientist who killed himself in 2003 after he was exposed as the source of a British Broadcasting Corp. report that accused Blair's office of "sex-ing up" prewar intelligence.

A separate 2004 inquiry — in which Chilcot took part — into intelligence on Iraq also cleared Blair's government, but criticized intelligence officials for relying on seriously flawed or unreliable sources.

Chilcot said his inquiry will call Blair, have access to all relevant British government documents, and seek information from decision makers in both Iraq and the United States.

"We certainly plan to have discussions on as broad a basis as we can and that must include, clearly, people in the United States as well as elsewhere. Discussions and evidence sessions are not necessarily the same thing, and of course we have no power to compel witnesses here, let alone in foreign governments," Chilcot said, indicating Bush-era officials won't be called to testify in person.

Blair's office said the ex-British leader is prepared to give testimony and to appear in public.

Critics of the war say the inquiry should seek to prove whether or not Blair offered Bush an assurance as early as mid-2002 — before lawmakers voted in 2003 to approve U.K. involvement — that Britain would join the war.

Blair was dubbed Bush's poodle over his support for the U.S.-led invasion and suffered domestically — his popularity ratings nose-dived, though he won a 2005 national election with a reduced majority.

Chilcot said the inquiry's findings will not be published before next summer, meaning the conclusions won't be known before Britain's next national election — which must be held by June 2010.

"It is obviously a political ploy so as not to make Iraq an issue in the election," said Brian Brivati, an academic at London's Kingston University.



MATT DUNHAM/AP

John Chilcot, center, the chairman of Britain's Iraq inquiry, sits with committee members, from left, Baroness Usha Prashar, Roderic Lyne, Martin Gilbert and Lawrence Freedman as he takes questions from journalists during a news conference Thursday in London.

57 U.K. troops wounded in early July

LONDON — Britain's Defense Ministry says 57 British soldiers were wounded in Afghanistan in the first two weeks of July — the highest casualty rate since operations began.

Officials said Thursday 57 troops were wounded in early July compared with 46 in the whole of June and 24 in May.

Britain has also had a high fatality rate in Afghanistan — 22 soldiers have been killed in July — the highest since the operations began.

Italy mulls exit after Afghan vote

ROME — Italy will be looking for an exit strategy from Afghanistan after the presidential election there next month, Premier Silvio Berlusconi

Accused Texas soldier's family awaits hearing

By TONY PERRY
Los Angeles Times

SHERMAN, Texas — Tears come to Elizabeth Russell's eyes when she thinks of the five American soldiers her son is accused of gunning down in a moment of rage in Iraq.

She prays for them: the Navy officer, the Army psychiatrist, and three enlisted men, and their widows, parents and children.

She also prays for her son, Army Sgt. John Russell, who faces five counts of premeditated murder for what happened May 11 at a combat stress center near Baghdad.

Russell, 44, is in custody in Kuwait, awaiting an Article 32 hearing, the military equivalent of a preliminary hearing. Under military law, a conviction can carry a death sentence; the minimum is life in prison.

In more than seven years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq, there have been cases of alleged attacks among U.S. troops, but never one in which a soldier stands accused of killing five colleagues.

The Russell case also brings up issues of how the Army evaluates the mental health of troops in combat zones, many of whom, like Russell, have endured repeated deployments. The Army is now studying the psychological services available to soldiers in Iraq.

Elizabeth and Wilburn Russell live in the two-story house that was meant to be the dream home for their son and his German-born wife, Mandy, when he retired from the Army.

Russell had been a competent communications technician but hardly a stellar performer. After 16 years, he was still a sergeant. He had lost a stripe earlier for unauthorized absence.

Russell planned to return to Texas and get a maintenance job at the Texas Instruments plant where his parents worked until retirement.

The Russells, their three daughters and John Russell's son, John Michael II, 20, are confused about "the event."

"Every day, it's all I think about," said John Michael II, who



TONY PERRY/Los Angeles Times

Elizabeth and Wilburn Russell hold a picture of their son, Army Sgt. John Russell, who is accused of killing five U.S. personnel in a shooting at a combat stress center in Iraq.

inherited his father's love of fishing and works in a bait shop. He has changed his mind about joining the military.

The family thinks that Russell snapped under stress, a year into his third combat tour in Iraq. His first tour lasted 15 months, his second tour 12.

"This wasn't John, not John," said Elizabeth Russell, 72.

E-mails and phone calls by Russell to family members suggested that he had been spiraling downward emotionally. After his second tour, Russell had complained of sleeplessness and nightmares. At the U.S. base medical center in Bamberg, Germany, he saw a therapist and was given pills to help him sleep.

When his unit redeployed to Iraq early in 2008, Russell was delayed because of a death in his wife's family. In May 2008, he deployed with a different unit. It was not a good fit.

In February, Russell told his sister, Lisa Russell Wilson, 48, that he was ostracized and picked on.

"He asked me to pray for him," Wilson said. "He said: 'I'm not going to make it. These people are after me.'"

On April 15, he e-mailed his mother: "I am not feeling good, I have something and I can't get rid of it. Love John."

Russell often mentioned officers who singled him out for criticism and tough duty, like a three-day stint at a forward sentry post without relief.

At 6 feet 4 inches and in good physical shape, Russell was an imposing presence, but complaining and angry behavior were out of character, the family says.

Wilburn Russell, 73, a former boxer and retired Department of Defense civilian employee, said

that the changes in his son were alarming, but that the family was helpless.

"Whether these things happened or not, they were real to John," said his father.

On May 6, John Russell e-mailed his wife: "Hey, baby, for the last two days I have been in hell. I was threatened buy a soldier. I didn't know what to do. All it is all said and done, I am left feeling so terrible you could just never know. These people are not good people and I think that I am going a little crazy ... I really need to get out of the Army soon. I came close to losing everything that I have worked for."

A day later, Russell e-mailed: "I went off on an officer, but he is not going to get me in trouble because he was one of the people that threatened me. So we have a clean slate. Love John."

What happened next is unclear. Russell went to the combat

stress center at Camp Liberty where mental-health workers evaluate soldiers for post-traumatic stress disorder and depression. Russell was close to the end of his deployment. He was given medication and his sidearm was taken away, a routine precaution for soldiers receiving counseling.

After a May 11 dispute at the center, Russell was ordered to leave. Outside, he allegedly took a gun from his escort, burst into the center and started firing.

Dead were Navy Cmdr. Charles Springle, 52, of Wilmington, N.C.; Maj. Matthew Philip Houseal, 54, of Amarillo, Texas; Staff Sgt. Christian Enrique Bueno-Galdos, 25, of Paterson, N.J.; Spc. Jacob David Barton, 20, of Lenox, Mo., and Pfc. Michael Edward Yates Jr., 19, of Federalsburg, Md.

Russell's family is reluctant to use the word "victim," not wanting to be insensitive to the relatives of the five dead soldiers. Still, they feel that John was also a victim — of stress from 39 months in Iraq and an Army mental-health system that failed him.

"I don't think he was in his right mind," said Mandy, 33.

The Army is also interested in the state of Russell's mind. In June, he was taken to Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington for psychological tests before returning to Kuwait. His family was not allowed to see him.

In 2009, Russell needed another four-year hitch to qualify for a full pension. His family believes that a threat from an officer to block his re-enlistment — real, false or imagined — might have pushed him into violence.

These days, Elizabeth Russell peppers her son's military lawyer with questions but gets few answers. She sends books to her son in Kuwait.

While in the brig, Russell had a "hostile meeting" with a psychiatrist and fired his first lawyer. His mother remembers a telephone call with him four days after "the event."

"He didn't remember anything about that day," she said. "He sounded really tired, exhausted. ... I told him we loved him."

Army delays private's deployment over challenge

By ROBERT PATRICK
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

ST. LOUIS — The Army and the parents of a Fort Leonard Wood soldier challenging her enlistment struck a deal Tuesday to keep Pvt. Hillary J. Poole from being shipped overseas until the issue is resolved.

Poole's parents filed an emergency request in federal court on July 24 to block her scheduled deployment this week to Germany and then to Afghanistan a few months later.

Kristeen and Thomas Poole are claiming that in February, a deceptive recruiter told Kristeen Poole to sign her husband's name on forms authorizing Hillary's overnight evaluation by the Army. But the forms actually were enlistment forms, the suits say.

Documents filed on behalf of the Army say that Poole's parents were both present and knowingly signed the forms. They were enthusiastic about their daughter's career choice, even throwing a farewell party and inviting the recruiter, documents say.

Hillary Poole entered basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C., on March 11.

Her parents were happy until a few days or weeks later, when Poole began to regret her decision and a question about her enlistment bonus arose, the Army filing says.

The Pooles called Fort Jackson officials April 9 and claimed that Thomas Poole never signed the papers. Kristeen Poole then called officials twice and apologized for lodging false accusations against the recruiter, the documents say.

An Army investigation later found that Hillary Poole's enlistment had been proper and that Thomas Poole's signature was

not an obvious forgery, the filing says.

The larger issue of whether the Pooles were misled on the enlistment has not been resolved, but lawyers for Poole's parents and the Army agreed Tuesday to keep Hillary Poole in the country and at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri at least until Aug. 18, the date of the next hearing in the case.

Poole was scheduled to fly from Syracuse, N.Y., near her home in Savannah, N.Y., to St. Louis on Thursday and then on to Germany. Her unit is scheduled to go to Afghanistan this fall.

Kristeen and Hillary Poole have declined to talk to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch without their lawyer's approval.

Tony Rothert, a lawyer with the American Civil Liberties Union representing the Pooles, declined to comment on Tuesday's filings.

Douglas Smith, a spokesman for the Army Recruiting Command, referred a reporter's questions to the U.S. attorney's office, which declined to comment on the facts of the case.

In her court filings, Assistant U.S. Attorney Cynthia J. Hyde said that Hillary Poole was not entitled to a temporary restraining order, as she had not exhausted all her options with the Army. She could still apply to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records, Hyde wrote.

The only urgency in the case is of the Pooles' own making, Hyde continued, waiting until the last minute to try to block the deployment. The Pooles are also asking a federal judge to "intervene in the management and control of the military, areas constitutionally reserved to the executive and legislative branches of government," Hyde wrote.

Military considers ban on Twitter, Facebook

By LEO SHANE III
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Defense officials are looking into a military-wide ban on social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook because of security concerns related to the Internet portals.

Tim Madden, spokesman for U.S. Strategic Command's task force on network operations, said the ban is "under consideration" but no further decisions have been made. Last week, his office distributed a memo to commands worldwide asking for feedback on

such a ban on the military's NIPRNet, the Defense Department's unsecured computer network.

On Thursday, Wired Magazine's Danger Room blog broke news of the memo, which states the sites could make the military's networks easy targets for hackers. They also reported frustration among many defense officials who have been pushing the social networking tools as critical for the services' public relations and recruiting.

Earlier this year, Army officials ordered network managers at

81 U.S. locations to unblock Web sites such as Facebook, Flickr and Twitter as part of an effort to standardize access to the popular social networking tools.

Last month, the staff of Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Adm. Mike Mullen unveiled his new Facebook page, and he told reporters that Pentagon leaders should know and understand more about popular Internet sites their subordinates are using.

But Madden said the inquiry into blocking the sites isn't a rejection of those ideas, but instead

simply part of ongoing reviews of security and safety protocols.

"We're always looking at ways to protect the network," he said.

In May 2007, STRATCOM officials blocked access from official government computers to 13 sites, including MySpace and YouTube. At the time, officials said those moves were designed to stop the heavy drain the media-intensive sites put on the military network.

Any changes implemented by the command likely would not affect Internet cafes or home Inter-

net connections at base housing, both of which are usually linked to an outside, private service provider.

But computers in all military offices, and troops in Iraq and Afghanistan at bases whose only Internet access is through the NIPRNet, would be affected.

Madden could not give a timeline for when a decision might be made, or provide details of what reaction officials have received to the news so far.

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Taliban vows to disrupt elections in Afghanistan

Citizens warned to avoid polling places during 'American process'

By RAHIM FAIEZ
The Associated Press

KABUL — The Taliban urged Afghans on Thursday to stay away from the Aug. 20 elections, threatening to block the roads to polling stations and dismissing the balloting as an "American process."

In a statement posted on a Web site used frequently by the militants, the extremist Islamic movement mocked the upcoming presidential and provincial polls as part of an American "failed strategy" in the country — paid for and secured by foreigners.

The statement highlights the pressure likely to face voters who choose to cast ballots in areas of the country where the insurgents are strongest.

"All those Afghans should stand together with the Islamic emirate and should not participate in this American process," the Taliban said in a statement. The Islamic emirate is the name used by Taliban groups loyal to Mullah Omar.

The statement urged Taliban fighters to prevent people from voting.

It said that a day before the elections, roads would be blocked to government vehicles and civilian traffic "and the people should be aware of that."

Hundreds of polling stations are likely to remain shut on the election date, almost all in areas dominated by Pashtuns, the biggest ethnic group and the backbone of the Taliban.

A low Pashtun turnout could call the legitimacy of the election results into question.

A low turnout in Pashtun areas could also cost President Hamid Karzai support among his fellow Pashtuns, who tend to vote by ethnicity even though many of them are disenchanted with him because of his ties to the

Americans.

Karzai's chief rival in the 39-candidate field, former Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah, is popular in northern Tajik areas, which are more peaceful and more likely to have a strong turnout.

Karzai is widely assumed to be the front-runner but if he fails to win more than half the votes in the crowded field, he would face a runoff with the second-place finisher in October.

Karzai could be vulnerable if his opponents rally around an

"All those Afghans should stand together with the Islamic emirate and should not participate in this American process."

Taliban statement

dential election but had failed.

"There will obviously be some danger if the Taliban really try to stop the voting but in my experience if people really want to vote they will do so," Neumann said.

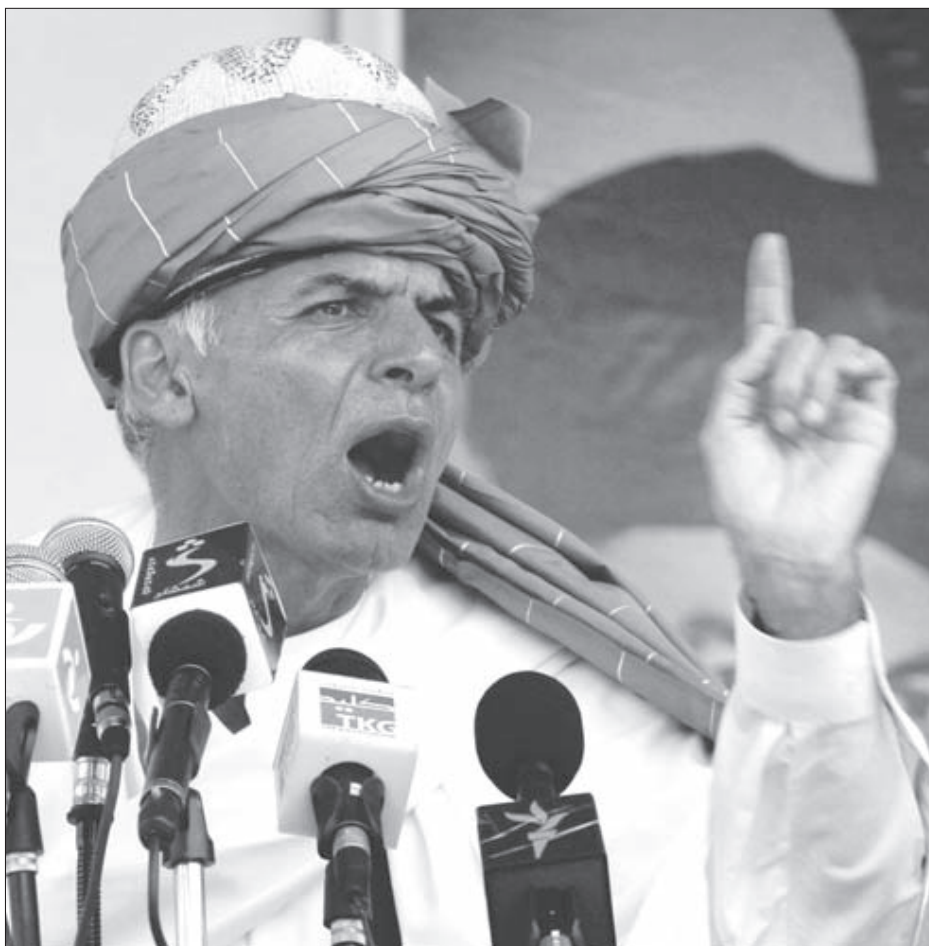
Also Thursday, a roadside blast killed four Afghan guards in the south of the country, the Interior Ministry said.

It said the blast occurred in Helmand province and the victims worked for a private security company.

Thousands of U.S. Marines and British soldiers are conducting anti-Taliban offensives in Helmand province, one of the centers of the Taliban insurgency.

Insurgents have ramped up attacks markedly since the last presidential election, and have dramatically increased their use of roadside bombs this year.

July has been the deadliest month of the war for U.S. and international forces, and the rising casualties have shaken public support for the war in Europe even as the U.S. ramps up its participation in the conflict.



RAHMAT GUL/AP

Afghan presidential candidate Ashraf Ghani delivers a speech during an election campaign in Jalalabad, Afghanistan. Afghans will head to the polls on Aug. 20 to elect a new president.



Supporters of Afghan presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah listen to a speech Thursday during his election campaign in Kabul. The Taliban urged Afghans on Thursday to stay away from the Aug. 20 elections, threatening to block the roads to polling stations.

RAFIQ MAQBOOL/AP

IN THE WORLD

North Korea seizes South Korean boat

By KWANG-TAE KIM
The Associated Press

SEOUL — North Korea is investigating a South Korean fishing boat and its four-member crew that it seized Thursday after the vessel strayed into the country's waters, the South Korean government said.

The incident came amid tensions on the divided peninsula over North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, and as the two Koreas have been mired in a standoff for more than a year over Seoul's tough policy toward Pyongyang.

Early Thursday morning, a North Korean patrol boat took the 29-ton fishing boat "800 Yeonan" into custody after it crossed into the North's eastern waters, apparently because its satellite navigation system malfunctioned, an official at South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said.

The official, who spoke on customary condition of anonymity, said the boat was taken to North Korea's eastern port of Jangjon, just north of the border.

South Korea asked the North to quickly release the vessel and crew, Seoul's Unification Ministry

said, citing Seoul's repatriation of North Korean fishing boats in recent years.

An unidentified North Korean maritime official told a South Korean counterpart by telephone that "a related agency is investigating" the incident, the ministry said. The South asked the North to keep it informed of developments and the North said it would do so, according to the ministry, which handles relations with the North.

North Korea's state news agency, monitored in Seoul, carried no reports on the incident.

Following the seizure, dozens of demonstrators gathered in central Seoul to denounce the North and call for the immediate release of the fishing boat and crew.

Maritime incidents between the two sides involving fishing boats and other commercial vessels occur from time to time and are generally resolved amicably.

However, the countries' disputed western maritime border has been the scene of deadly fighting in the past.

In June 2002, six South Korean troops died when North Korea sank a South Korean patrol boat in the area.



LEE JIN-MAN/AP

South Koreans burn North Korean flags and a portrait of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il while demanding the return of a South Korean boat and crew at a rally Thursday in Seoul.

Customers are shown Thursday in the Samtaeseong restaurant in Pyongyang. North Korea's first fast-food restaurant has quickly become popular. More branches are planned, a restaurant manager says.

AP/APTN



N. Korea gets taste of fast food

The Associated Press

SEOUL — North Korea's first fast-food restaurant has quickly become popular among local residents and foreigners and plans to open branches in the future, a restaurant manager said Thursday.

North Korea opened the Samtaeseong restaurant in its capital, Pyongyang, last month. It is the isolated communist nation's first fast-food restaurant and offers hamburgers, french fries, waffles and draft beer.

"Our restaurant specializes in serving popular food that's well-known throughout the world," manager Ko Jong Ok told broadcaster APTN in Pyongyang.

"It is not so long since its opening, but our restaurant has become popular among our people and foreigners," she added. "We are planning to set up branches in many places of the city in the future."

APTN footage showed restaurant staff in orange aprons and white hats preparing french fries and hamburgers. The restaurant appeared to be styled after fast-food joints the world over and several North Koreans were seen ordering and others eating. But more seats were empty than filled.

"I think it is very clean and I think every effort has been made to present the food very well," said George Bottomley, a British visitor.

North Korea calls hamburgers "minced beef and bread" in an apparent attempt not to give the impression that its citizens have embraced the Ameri-

can food icon.

And the North's ever-present propaganda was close at hand. On the wall of the building that houses the restaurant is a banner reading, "Long live the Songun (military-first) revolution ideology."

Songun is a key policy of authoritarian leader Kim Jong Il that calls for putting priority on the country's armed forces.

The minced beef and bread at the restaurant costs \$1.70, according to the Choson Sinbo, a Tokyo-based newspaper considered a mouthpiece for Pyongyang.

That would eat up more than half of the average North Korean's daily income. South Korea's central bank put last year's average per capita income at \$1,065.

Choson Sinbo reported last week on the opening of the restaurant, which it said occurred last month.

North Korea has relied on outside handouts to feed its hunger-stricken 24 million people since natural disasters and mismanagement devastated its economy in the 1990s. Its government strictly controls information about the outside world.

On Wednesday, North Korean state TV aired footage from South Korean television programs edited to highlight social and economic problems in the far richer South in a move apparently aimed at quashing rumors among the North's impoverished people that the rival country is better off.

Nigerian troops kill at least 100 in militant hunt

By NJADVARA MUSA
The Associated Press

MAIDUGURI, Nigeria — Security forces hunted door-to-door for Islamic militants in northern Nigeria on Thursday after killing more than 100 of them by storming the sect's compound. A top rights group said innocent people were getting executed in the process.

The government, which blames the Boko Haram sect for instigating days of violence in the mostly Muslim region, shelled and stormed the group's mosque and headquarters Wednesday night, setting off a raging firefight with retreating militants.

Sect leader Mohammed Yusuf escaped along with about 300 followers but his deputy was killed, according to Army commander Maj. Gen. Saleh Maina.

Police said most of the dead were Islamist fighters.

A local rights group charged Thursday that security forces have been killing innocent civilians as they fought to crush

the sect. Witnesses said they watched troops executing people alleged to be militants.

An AP reporter saw soldiers, under fire, shoot their way into the sect's mosque in Maiduguri on Wednesday and then rake those holed up inside with gunfire. The reporter later counted about 50 bodies inside the building and another 50 in the courtyard outside.

Another five corpses were just inside a large house near the mosque. Maina pointed to the body of a plump, bearded man and said it the Boko Haram sect's vice chairman, Bukar Shekau.

"The mission has been accomplished," said Maina, the army commander.

The militants, armed with homemade hunting rifles and firebombs, bows and arrows, machetes and scimitars, were no match for the government forces.

Army Col. Ben Anahotu said three police officers were also killed in the battle.

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A Spanish police officer walks toward the wreckage of a car after an explosion Thursday in the beach area near Palma de Mallorca, Spain.

Two police officers killed in bombing on Spanish island

By MANUEL MIELNIEZUK
The Associated Press

PALMA DE MALLORCA, Balearic Islands — An explosion on the Spanish resort island of Mallorca killed two police officers Thursday and authorities blocked all outgoing flights and ships from leaving as part of a manhunt.

The bombing, blamed on Basque separatist group ETA, targeted a police vehicle. It was the second attack linked to ETA in less than 36 hours. A powerful car bomb Wednesday destroyed a police barracks in the northern Spanish city of Burgos, injuring about 60 people.

If confirmed as ETA attacks, the blasts would conflict with government assertions that the group is seriously weakened after major police crackdowns in Spain and France in recent years.

The 50th anniversary of ETA's founding is Friday and the group may be trying to demonstrate with attacks on the two consecutive days before the milestone that it was not in any danger of breaking up.

Thursday's victims belonged to the paramilitary Civil Guard, which is chiefly in charge of policing rural areas and guarding official buildings. Mallorca is one of Spain's top tourist destinations, and the explosion occurred at the height of the summer holiday season.



SOURCE: ESRI AP

Television images showed the charred and mangled remains of a vehicle that had been parked on a street in the Palmanova beach resort area, southwest of the island's capital, Palma de Mallorca.

The cause of the explosion was under investigation. News reports said the explosion may have been caused by a bomb attached to the underside of a police patrol vehicle.

"State security forces have sealed off the island to avoid the escape of the terrorists," a regional Interior Ministry statement said.

The blast occurred shortly before 2 p.m. The Interior Ministry said several people were injured but none was in serious condition.

What drives the ETA?

■ **History** — ETA was formed in 1959 during the right-wing dictatorship of Gen. Francisco Franco. Its name is a Basque-language acronym for Euskadi Ta Askatasuna, meaning Basque Homeland and Freedom.

■ **Goals** — The group's aim is for an independent state made up of Basque areas in northern Spain and southwestern France and parts of the northern Spanish region of Navarra.

■ **Violence** — After initially seeking its goals through political means, ETA began to resort to violence, mainly car bombs and point-blank shootings. Its first killing was in 1968. ETA is now blamed for 825 deaths.

■ **Political support** — Political parties linked to ETA have been banned in recent years. Previously, groups such as Batasuna used to garner some 12 percent of votes in regional elections.

■ **Members** — During the 1970s and early 1980s, ETA was estimated to have had around 1,000 members, out of a regional population of just more than 2 million. In the 1990s, France stepped up cooperation with Spain in chasing down ETA militants who had traditionally sought refuge there.

■ **Prisoners** — There are now nearly 1,000 ETA members jailed in Spain and France.

From The Associated Press

Iranian police beat protesters

The Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iranian police fired tear gas and beat anti-government protesters with batons to disperse thousands at a graveside memorial Thursday for victims of post-election violence, witnesses and state television said.

Demonstrations that drew thousands more later spread to other parts of the capital of Tehran and more clashes with security forces erupted. Witnesses said police fired tear gas at dozens of demonstrators on Valiasr Street who set tires and trash cans ablaze in response.

Police barred opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi from joining the crowd around the grave of Neda Agha Soltan, a young woman was shot to death at a June 20 rally to protest the disputed presidential election. The 27-year-old music student's dying moments on the pavement were filmed and circulated widely on the Web, and her name became a rallying cry for the opposition.

"Neda is alive, Ahmadinejad is dead," some of those at the ceremony chanted, referring to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who the opposition claims won the June 12 election by fraud.

Witnesses said plainclothes forces charged at them with batons and tear gas, some of them chanting, "Death to those who are against the supreme leader."



COURTESY OF CASPIAN MAKAN/AP

This photo allegedly shows Neda Agha Soltan, whose death during a street protest in Tehran, Iran, was captured on videos that were distributed across the Internet.

State television also reported that police used tear gas to disperse the demonstrators.

An amateur video that purports to show the memorial shows thousands marching through the cemetery, chanting and flashing victory signs. Some wore green T-shirts — the color of Mousavi's reformist movement.

With Thursday's ceremony, the opposition aimed to harness growing anger over abuses in the nearly 7-week-old crackdown and give their movement further momentum in the face of the continuing wave of arrests.

Paper: China leads world in abortions

The Associated Press

BEIJING — China performs more abortions than any other country in the world, about 13 million a year, mostly for young single women who aren't using contraception. One expert says the figures show many Chinese now consider the cheap, widely available procedure an acceptable form of birth control.

In a rare disclosure of family planning statistics — which are considered state secrets — the official China Daily newspaper reported Thursday that about 13 million surgical abortions are performed

in Chinese hospitals and 10 million abortion pills are sold every year. The pills can induce an abortion very early in pregnancy, and are commonly referred to as the morning-after pill.

The report said the real number of abortions is believed to be even higher since many are done outside of hospitals in unregistered rural clinics.

Ma Xiaonian — a well-known sex therapist who hosted a popular sex-focused talk show that was pulled off the air in 2007 for being too racy — said the abortion figures showed the inadequacy of China's sex education.

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IN THE STATES

Judge orders release of young Gitmo detainee

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A judge ruled Thursday that one of the youngest detainees brought to Guantanamo Bay is being held illegally and must be released.

U.S. District Judge Ellen Huvelle's order does not end the case of Mohammed Jawad, however. Deputy Assistant Attorney General Ian Gershengorn told the judge that as the United States negotiates with the detainee's home country of Afghanistan for his return next month, the Justice Department also is pursuing a criminal investigation.

Gershengorn said Attorney General Eric Holder has not yet decided whether to indict Jawad, who allegedly threw a grenade that wounded two U.S. soldiers and their interpreter in December 2002. That means it's possible he could be brought to the United States for a criminal trial.

Huvelle said she had no authority to prevent an indictment, but she encouraged prosecutors to think hard about problems with the case, including Jawad's mental competency to stand trial and the fact that he's already been incarcerated for six years.

"After this horrible, long, tortured history, I hope the government will succeed in getting him back home," she said. "Enough has been imposed on this young man to date."

Huvelle gave the government three weeks to fulfill legal requirements to report to Congress about any national security risks and diplomatic agreements for Jawad's release. She ordered the government to report back to her by Aug. 24 and said she hoped by then he was on a trans-Atlantic flight.

Jawad's attorneys say he was only about 12 years old when he was arrested in 2002, although there aren't records of his birth.

The Pentagon says a bone scan shows Jawad was older, about 17, when arrested.

House panel goes back to work on health care

Deal close but not assured as doubts on both sides loom

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR AND ERICA WERNER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Health care legislation advanced slowly Thursday in the last of three House committees to consider the measure as the Senate's top Republican accused Democrats of cutting Medicare to finance a "massive new government-run plan."

"Some in Congress seem to be in such a rush to pass just any reform, rather than the right reform, that they're looking everywhere for the money to pay for it, even if it means sticking it to seniors with cuts to Medicare," said Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., in the latest in a series of daily Senate speeches on health care.

McConnell's Republicans, unanimously opposed to Democratic-drafted legislation in the House, are watching warily while three members of their rank-and-file negotiate over a bipartisan

plan in the Senate that could hand President Barack Obama a victory on his top domestic priority.

Across the Capitol, the House Energy and Commerce Committee plowed methodically through a stack of proposed changes to the bill, one day after the White House, Democratic leaders and a band of conservative party members reached a compromise to clear the measure.

Chairman Henry Waxman, D-Calif., presiding over the session, warned lawmakers against offering amendments that make the bill more expensive — and agreed to a Republican suggestion to limit the time allowed for debate. He said he hopes to finish the bill sometime Friday, and House leaders have promised to bring it up for a vote in the full House in September, after the congressional August break.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi expressed confidence the committee would approve the bill, and

said the full House would follow suit in the fall. She also signaled flexibility on key issues, saying that despite her own backing for abortion rights, she would not allow the issue to torpedo legislation.

Waxman's shaky majority was on display early, when the committee voted 29-28 to defeat a Republican amendment to strengthen ID requirements designed to prevent illegal immigrants from getting Medicaid benefits.

Another controversial Republican amendment passed by voice vote, over Waxman's objections. Backed by Rep. Mike Rogers, R-Mich., it would bar the federal government from using research comparing medical treatments' effectiveness to deny or ration care.

Already, Congress is running behind a timetable set by its leaders and the White House for a health care bill.



WILLIAM B. PLOWMAN, NBC NEWS/AP

Health talk

"Some in Congress seem to be in such a rush to pass just any reform, rather than the right reform ... even if it means sticking it to seniors with cuts to Medicare."

Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky.



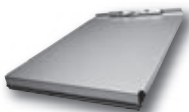









TONY DEJAK/AP

"We did give [Congress] a deadline, and sort of we missed that deadline. But that's OK. We don't want to just do it quickly, we want to do it right."

President Barack Obama

Health plan proposals

 Which version?	 Who's covered?	 What will it cost?	 How it's paid for	 Requirements for individuals	 Choosing your insurance	 Changes to Medicaid
 House Democrats	Around 94 percent of non-elderly residents compared with 81 percent today. Nearly half the 17 million nonelderly who remain uninsured would be illegal immigrants.	About \$1.5 trillion over 10 years.	\$544 billion over the next decade from new income taxes; \$37 billion in business tax increases; \$500 billion in cuts to Medicare and Medicaid; about \$200 billion from noncoverage penalties.	Individuals must have insurance, enforced through tax penalty with hardship waivers. The penalty is 2.5 percent of income.	New Health Insurance Exchange open to individuals and, initially, small employers; it could be expanded to large employers over time. States could opt to operate their own exchanges in place of the national exchange.	The federal-state insurance program for the poor would be expanded starting in 2013 to cover all nonelderly individuals with incomes up to 133 percent of the federal poverty level (\$14,404).
 House Republicans	In outline form for now. Aims to make insurance affordable and accessible to all. No estimates about how many additional people would be covered.	Unknown.	No new taxes are proposed, but Republicans say they want to reduce Medicare and Medicaid fraud.	No mandates.	No new purchasing exchange or marketplace is proposed. Health savings accounts and flexible spending plans would be strengthened.	People eligible for Medicaid would be allowed to use the value of their benefit to purchase a private plan.
 Obama	All children and many now-uninsured adults.	Estimates as high as \$1.6 trillion over 10 years.	Obama proposed cuts within the health care system and raising taxes on households making more than \$250,000 annually.	Unlike Democratic primary opponent Hillary Rodham Clinton, Obama did not propose an "individual mandate." Instead he'd have required all children to be insured, making it the parents' responsibility.	Through a new National Health Insurance Exchange where individuals could buy the new public plan or qualified private plans.	Would have expanded Medicaid eligibility, but didn't specify income levels. Information from The Associated Press

FACES

Bryce Dallas Howard joins third 'Twilight'

Bryce Dallas Howard is sinking her teeth into a role in the "Twilight" series. Howard has been cast as the vampire Victoria in "Eclipse," the third film in the franchise. She's taking over for Rachelle Lefevre, who played the part in the first two movies, the 2008 smash "Twilight" and the upcoming "New Moon." Summit Entertainment says Lefevre isn't returning because of scheduling conflicts. The 28-year-old Howard is no stranger to blockbusters, having co-starred in "Spider-Man 3" and "Terminator Salvation." She also appeared in "The Village" and "Lady in the Water."

"Eclipse," based on the third book in Stephenie Meyer's "Twilight" saga, is scheduled to begin shooting in Vancouver in August. Part two, "New Moon," comes out Nov. 20.

Monaghan jumping into sci-fi

ABC says Dominic Monaghan, best known as the doomed rock star Charlie from "Lost," is joining the cast of its upcoming sci-fi drama, "FlashForward."

He will face new challenges on "FlashForward," when the world's population simultaneously suffers a blackout, then recovers with visions of what may, or may not, be waiting in the future. Previously announced stars of "FlashForward" include Courtney B. Vance and Sonya Walger. It premieres Sept. 24.



Monaghan

Barker asks for end to bear pits

Former game show host and longtime animal rights activist Bob Barker hopes to convince the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in North Carolina to quit displaying bears in pits and cages as tourist attractions.

Barker met Tuesday with Chief Michell Hicks to discuss the use of bears in Cherokee. Debbie Leahy of People for the



Barker

Ethical Treatment of Animals accompanied him.

Barker planned to discuss the meeting at a news conference Wednesday morning in Asheville. He wrote to Hicks in June asking that he close bear pits at three locations. Hicks told the Asheville Citizen-Times that the tribe follows federal regulations in caring for the bears. Barker says the bear pits are inhumane. Barker is part American Indian and grew up on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

Grier joins cast of Broadway's 'Race'

David Alan Grier is joining the cast of David Mamet's Broadway-bound play "Race."

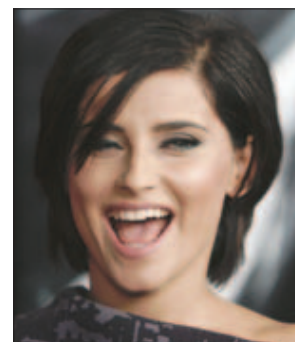


Grier

The 53-year-old actor will star in the production along with the previously announced James Spader, Richard Thomas and Kerry Washington. "Race" opens Dec. 6 at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre. Preview performances begin Nov. 16. Mamet will also direct. Grier has appeared in films such as "A Soldier's Story," "Streamers" and "The Woodsman."

Producer Jeffrey Richards has declined to talk about the plot of "Race," but said earlier this year: "The title is self-explanatory."

— The Associated Press



AP file

Nelly Furtado admits she was tired after finishing a hectic tour to promote her last record, so she decided to write the follow-up in Spanish.

Furtado finds fresh inspiration for new album

Nelly Furtado admits that writing her new, all-Spanish album, "Mi Plan," wasn't in her plans at all after finishing a hectic tour to promote her last chart-topping record.

"I was physically tired and I wasn't feeling inspired. It was almost as if I lost my pop inspiration to write in English," Furtado, 30, said. "I just needed a new outlet, and I found it by writing in Spanish."

The singer told The Associated Press at a Miami recording studio that her fourth full-length album, which is set for release Sept. 15 on her own Nelstar Music label, more intimately explores the passion that fuels relationships.

"I think this album has some of my first true love songs ever. They're not complicated. They're not over-intellectualized, and I found it liberating to be able to sing in the Latin language and to express myself from my Latin soul," said Furtado, the Canadian-born daughter of Portuguese immigrants.

The Grammy-Award winner, who vaulted up the pop charts with such indelible tracks as "I'm Like a Bird" in 2000 and "Promiscuous" in 2006, is set to deliver a new fleet of mostly up-tempo, melodic tunes on "Mi Plan." "Manos Al Aire" and "Mas" have already hit the airwaves, and two more songs are expected to be available on iTunes in the coming weeks leading up to the album's release. The 11 songs on the album include collaborations with Mexican singers Alejandro Fernandez and Julieta Venegas, Spanish singer Concha Buika, Latin hip-hop singer La Mala Rodriguez and Dominican singer Juan Luis Guerra.

With a surprise performance by classical singer Josh Groban in "Silencio," Furtado said getting him to participate in the album was a "huge blessing."

"I thought it was important to sort of showcase on this album an artist that people know more for their English recordings," she said. "So, I thought by working with Josh would actually elevate my point that language isn't a barrier when it comes to music."

— The Associated Press

CLICK AND GROAN



AP

Funnyman Jason Bateman has had a lot of crappy jobs — just check out his acting resume. Bateman, who starred in the TV show "Arrested Development" and last summer's flick "Hatch," has delivered screen gems like "Teen Wolf Too" and says his other bad jobs can be found online. He jokes with fans, "Everyone knows how to access imdb[.com], right? Just go ahead and pick [my worst job ever]. Throw a dart at it."

— Wireless Flash

STRIPES ON SCREEN



MCT

While Jack White is touring with his latest indie group, the Dead Weather, it was announced that the band that shot him to fame, the White Stripes, will release a concert film in the fall. Directed by Emmett Malloy, "Under Great White Northern Lights" follows Jack and Meg White across Canada, where they play unconventional venues such as a city bus. It will premiere at the Toronto Film Festival on Sept. 19.

— Los Angeles Times

FAITH

Iranian persecution burdens Bahais in U.S.

By KATE LINTHICUM
AND AMBER SMITH

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — The 2,700 or so followers of the Bahai faith in Southern California enjoy a life their brethren in Iran have cause to desire.

Here, they have access to education, work and, most importantly for them, the right to worship.

Iran's fundamentalist Shiite government has barred the country's 300,000 Bahai from holding government jobs, attending universities and practicing their religion, according to human-rights groups and the United Nations. Conditions have worsened in recent years, observers say, and now seven leaders of Iran's Bahai community are held in Tehran's Evin prison, where they face charges of espionage and possible execution.

Their imprisonment has been condemned by the United States and human-rights groups, who see it as evidence of Iran's persistent persecution of Bahais, its largest non-Muslim minority. It has weighed heavily on the faith's adherents in Los Angeles.

Nonetheless, the Bahai's response to the arrests has been understated, at least in public. Local Bahais — immigrants and American converts — have neither taken to the streets in protest, nor have they tried to ride the wave of international indignation over Iran's disputed presidential election last month.

To do so, they said, would run counter to their religious principles of love, compassion and trustworthiness. "These tests and difficulties have a purpose to them. They help us grow spiritually," said Randy Dobbs, a Western-born Bahai leader who lives in Los Angeles. "Persecution makes people come together."

In recent weeks, especially before the postponement of a July 11 trial date for the imprisoned leaders in Iran, Dobbs and others had courted media attention here.

They also have hosted support meetings at a large Bahai Center for relatives of the imprisoned



AXEL KOESTER/Los Angeles Times

Iraj Kamalabadi, right, a member of the Bahai faith, meets with others at the Bahai Information Center in Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. His sister, Fariba, is among seven Bahai leaders imprisoned in Iran on espionage charges.

Iranians.

Dobbs said that the Bahai faith is a religion of peace, and that its followers are required to support the government wherever they live. He said Bahais in Iran don't want to meddle in the country's politics; they just want their rights.

Today, there are more than 5 million adherents worldwide, including 165,000 in the United States, according to Bahai statistics. The Bahai do not have clergy, although members elect administrators at the local, national and global levels.

Bahais have faced persecution since the faith's founding days, especially in Iran, where its followers are considered apostates.

As many as 50,000 Bahais have left Iran in the past 50 years, scholars say. Conditions reached a low point during the years after the Islamic Revolution of 1979, when, they say, as many

as 200 Bahai were executed or disappeared.

For Iraj Kamalabadi of suburban Rancho Cucamonga, the record of persecution against Iranian Bahais is part of his family's history, with both his father and, lately, his sister having been imprisoned.

Kamalabadi, 51, was born in Iran and came to the U.S. in 1977. In 1983, his father was arrested, evidently because of his faith. He was imprisoned and tortured, Kamalabadi said. When his father was eventually released, he suffered a series of strokes and died not long afterward.

"When I think of my father and the tortures he had gone through, and I imagine the faces of those who tortured him, I forgive them," Kamalabadi said. "You focus on the positive. You don't want to become the same people as these enemies."

The situation for Iranian Ba-

hais has worsened since President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was elected in 2005, according to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

U.N. officials have said the Ahmadinejad government has circulated documents ordering the police and the Revolutionary Guard to collect information on Bahai followers.

The Iranian government insists that it does not harass Bahais and that it investigates only those who have connections to Iranian rivals abroad.

The seven leaders who were arrested last year were charged with "espionage for Israel, insulting religious sanctities and propaganda against the Islamic Republic," according to Iranian news reports.

Kamalabadi's sister, Fariba, was arrested at her home last spring and has spent more than a year in jail. At one point, she

shared a cell with Iranian-American journalist Roxana Saberi, who has petitioned for the release of the Bahai since her release in May.

Fariba Kamalabadi was kept in solitary confinement for four months with only a thin blanket for a covering, her brother said. She contracted pneumonia and has had difficulty recovering. When their mother visited Fariba in prison last month, "she did not even recognize her own daughter," he said.

These days, Iraj Kamalabadi spends most of his free time searching the Internet for the latest word on his sister.

The ordeal has frustrated him, but he said he tries to remain peaceful. The Bahai believe that suffering can help human beings advance spiritually.

"I have been praying more fervently," he said, "and with more ardor."

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Perspectives

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Grandmother drowns in creek trying to save kid

TX KOUNTZE— A grandmother drowned in Village Creek trying to help one of her grandchildren who appeared to be in distress in the water.

The Hardin County Sheriff's Office identified the victim as 52-year-old Connie Porche Thornton, of Starks, La.

KFDM-TV reported that the grandchildren were not injured and quoted Sheriff Ed Cain as saying Thornton might have suffered cramps in the water.

Eight injured in blast at explosives plant

OH MCARTHUR — An explosion at a southeast Ohio explosives manufacturing plant has injured at least eight workers.

Austin Powder Co. Executive Vice President Mike Gleason said the blast was in a building where workers make detonating cord used in commercial blasting. Four injured workers were taken to hospitals. Others were treated at the scene. The Cleveland-based plant manufactures explosives for the mining and construction industries and performs blasting services.

Police: Woman tried to free dog from shelter

WY CASPER — Police in Wyoming say they arrested a woman who they believe tried to bust her pit bull out of the doggie slammer.

Casper police allege the woman smashed a window at the Metro Animal Control shelter, triggering an alarm.

Officers say they found the dog running outside the building and arrested Jessica Johnson, 26, after a foot chase. She was booked on suspicion of burglary and conspiracy.

An arrest warrant affidavit says a man told officers he had driven Johnson and another man to the shelter. He said the pair had two-way radios and a backpack.

City attraction to restock exotic Koi fish

TX FORT WORTH — A Fort Worth attraction that lost exotic fish in a chlorination accident earlier this year is getting 60 new fish to replenish its stock.

The new Koi fish will be added to the three-pond Japanese Garden at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden.

About 100 of the fish died in February in an accidental chlorination that occurred during a routine pond cleaning.

The fish ranged in size from about six inches to three feet and were worth between \$10,000 and \$15,000.

Visitors can view the multicolored fish while dropping pellets of food into the ponds. The ponds normally contain about 800 Koi.

Holy car! Boy goes for spin to avoid church

UT PLAIN CITY — Police in Utah say a 7-year-old boy led officers on a car chase in an effort to avoid going to church.



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Dispatchers received reports of a child driving recklessly. Weber County Sheriff's Capt. Klint Anderson says one witness said the boy drove through a stop sign.

Anderson says two deputies caught up with the boy and tried unsuccessfully to stop the Dodge Intrepid in an area about 45 miles north of Salt Lake City. The car reached 40 mph before the boy stopped in a driveway and ran inside a home.

Anderson says when the boy's father later confronted him, the boy said he didn't want to go to church. The boy is too young to prosecute and no citations were issued, although police did urge the father to make his car keys more inaccessible to children.

Bear shot dead after breaking into house

OR GRANTS PASS — Everett Skinner and his family have started keeping their windows closed at night after a bear broke into their southwest Oregon home and he fatally shot it.

The bear ripped off a window screen and climbed into their den, Skinner said. His daughter Nicole awoke at about 11:30 p.m. to a strange shuffling sound and was the first to spot the bruin. She quickly retreated to her parents' room to get help.

Everett Skinner grabbed his shotgun and went to the den. He said the animal stood up and headed toward him, so he fired.

"It didn't even faze him," Skinner said.

In all, he fired his shotgun four



He's a porker

One of McKenzie Allison's market hogs is all bedded in at the Coos County Oregon Fairgrounds. There are some safety concerns from the state regarding swine flu and the animals, but most at the fair are more concerned about the heat for the next couple of days.

times, killing the animal.

"In hindsight, you start thinking of all that could have gone wrong," Nicole Skinner said. "We were very blessed that this didn't go badly."

Family members won't be sleeping with the windows open anymore. "That's the last fresh air we're going to get at night," Skinner said.

Teen recovering after shark bites her leg

TX EDINBURG — An Edinburg teen needed 15 stitches to close a leg wound after a shark bit her left leg.

Deidre Casas, 14, was in the Gulf of Mexico on a sandbar at South Padre Island when she felt something tugging on her left leg, she told KRGV-TV. "There was blood everywhere," the girl said.

Her mother, Joann Casas, says doctors did X-rays and decided the girl was bitten by a small shark, based on the type of wound and marks on her lower leg.

City offers free airfare to homeless

NY NEW YORK — Paris? Orlando? San Juan? New York City is buying one-way plane tickets for homeless families to leave the city.

It's part of a Bloomberg administration program to keep the homeless out of the expensive shelter system, which costs \$36,000 a year per family. More than 550 families have left the city since 2007. All it takes is for a relative to agree to take them in.

The city employs a travel agency to book one-way tickets for domestic travel and the Department of Homeless Services handles all international travel. So far, families have been sent to 24 states and 5 continents. City officials say none of the relocated families have returned to city shelters.

Twitter tiff: Moldy 'tweet' ticks off firm

IL CHICAGO — A Chicago company ticked off over a former tenant's moldy "tweet" is positioning itself for what could be a \$50,000 Twitter tiff.

Horizon Group Management LLC filed a lawsuit that accuses Amanda Bonnen of defaming the company in May when she "tweeted" about moldy apartments.

The lawsuit said she used Twitter, a microblogging service that allows users to give brief online status updates, to tell another user: "Who said sleeping in a moldy apartment was bad for you? Horizon really thinks it's okay."

Jeff Michael, general counsel for Horizon, said Bonnen's apartment was among several affected by an overnight leak in March when a contractor was making roof repairs.

Michael said the company resolved all but Bonnen's grievances.

The company claims her tweet was published "throughout the world" and severely damaged its good name.



Working out the kinks

paddle board off Daytona Beach, Fla.

A. J. Miller, of the Volusia County Beach Patrol, loosens up before hitting the surf in his



Cool and clean

People swim in the Pacific Ocean off the Santa Monica Pier in Santa Monica, Calif. A report on water quality at U.S. beaches shows a 10 percent decrease in closing or advisory days last year compared to 2007, but indicates pollution remains serious.



Need someone to love? Azure, a pit bull puppy whose previous owner is serving time for animal cruelty after he stabbed her seven times with a sword, is now for sale on Craigslist. Her current owner adopted the puppy after the stabbing, but now says she finds it difficult to care for a large animal in her California home.



A splashy entrance Luis Hurtado does a back flip off the old railroad bridge that crosses the Naches River alongside Highway 12 near Gleeed in Yakima, Wash., while swimmers cool off below him. Hurtado says he comes to the river nearly every day to escape the heat.



Move before it dries Charles Ennis balances atop a fire hydrant in downtown Cadiz, Ky., while working concrete on a sidewalk outside the Trigg County Justice Center.

Baby safe after theft attempt at hospital

TX FORT HOOD — Army officials are investigating the attempted kidnapping of a baby from the hospital at Fort Hood.

Officials say a woman wearing hospital scrubs took a newborn from a Darnall Army Medical Center room, setting off the hospital's infant abduction warning alarm. Hospital officials say the infant never left the ward and all babies were accounted for.

Army investigators aren't saying where the woman put the baby after she left the room and before she fled. Officials say the hospital was locked down, and they also notified other Central Texas hospitals to be alert for unauthorized people in maternity wards.

Army investigators publicized the incident and released hospital surveillance camera photos of a person of interest.

Woman accused of stabbing mom, officers

NY BALDWIN — A Long Island woman is accused of stabbing her mother and two police officers.

Nassau County police say the 23-year-old woman stabbed her 49-year-old mother on the arm with scissors during an argument. The victim drove herself to a hospital.

Police say when they tried to arrest the daughter at her Baldwin home, she stabbed one officer in the head and slashed a second officer in the face.

The woman faces three counts of assault as well as charges of weapon possession and resisting arrest.

Lawmakers look at selling Capitol for cash

AZ PHOENIX — For sale: historic buildings with reliable tenants.

Arizona lawmakers, desperate for cash, are considering selling the House and Senate buildings, then leasing them back over several years before assuming ownership again. Dozens of other state buildings may also be sold off and leased back as the state grapples with a huge budget deficit.

Under the complex financial arrangement, state government services would continue without interruption while the state picks up a cash infusion estimated at \$735 million.

The state's budget shortfall is projected at around \$3.4 billion.

Dad accused of bringing girl to robbery on trial

WA ELLENSBURG — A Washington state man accused of holding up a convenience store with his 9-year-old daughter at his side teared up when surveillance video from the store was shown in court.

Charges against Robert Daniel Webb, 42, include first-degree robbery.

Video of the March 31 holdup showed the robber telling the clerk he needed money for his daughter. He got away with about \$200.

The Daily Record reported that the store clerk told the court that he was uncertain whether the robber's gun was real or a toy.

The gun was later determined to be a painted toy.

Police: 11-year-old tried holdup with toy gun

OH CINCINNATI — An 11-year-old boy has been accused of trying to hijack two boys' scooters with a toy gun in an Ohio park.

Rich Harrison, the father of the two boys, 8 and 10, says it was a frightening experience because it wasn't clear that the gun was a toy.

Cincinnati police say the 11-year-old pointed the toy gun, saying he wanted to take one of the silver push scooters, and then chased the brothers as they raced away.

Police took the boy to a juvenile center, where he faces a hearing. A public defender doubts the boy could understand the consequences of his behavior.

Location of historic battle still a mystery

NY TICONDEROGA — The site of a historic battle lies somewhere in the forest along the Lake Champlain shoreline in an eastern Adirondack town.

But 400 years after French explorer Samuel de Champlain went to war against the Iroquois on July 30, 1609, the battleground's exact location remains elusive.

Most historians believe the battle was in Ticonderoga, 85 miles north of Albany. Officials at Fort Ticonderoga say the battle likely happened on a stretch of shoreline within the fort's property.

No evidence from the battle has ever turned up. The fight that saw Champlain and his Native American allies defeat a Mohawk war party was brief but it had a lasting impact.

Meatpackers' furloughs are extended again

NE HASTINGS — Voice-mail messages at two meatpacking plants in Nebraska are telling employees that their work furloughs have been extended again. The recordings at Premium Protein tell workers to call back on Aug. 11 for an update.

More than 250 employees have been off since the second week of June and they have not been paid.

Managers originally told workers they'd return on June 25.

The company headquarters and a processing plant are in Lincoln. Its slaughterhouse is in Hastings.

Prosecutors: Jefferson had many schemes

VA ALEXANDRIA — Prosecutors say the \$90,000 cash found in the freezer of a former Louisiana congressman was just the tip of the iceberg.

Prosecutor Rebeca Bellows told jurors that Democrat William Jefferson was engaged in numerous bribery schemes over his years in Congress and that the only difference with the money in the freezer is that he was caught on tape receiving it.

Defense attorney Robert Trout told the jury during closing arguments that bribery laws are constructed narrowly and that while Jefferson may have engaged in unethical influence peddling, he never acted illegally.

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OPINION

Hyper-security adds to public's fear

By DAVID IGNATIUS

WASHINGTON

It was an unsettling image: Arrayed in front of the neighborhood barbershop last week were four burly men with the characteristic earpieces and bulky suits that marked them as security officers. Inside, gracing the barber's chair, was a well-trimmed director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Robert Mueller.

Perhaps in today's Washington, the FBI director truly needs a security detail to protect him when he gets a haircut. But I wonder: From my vantage, the blatant obviousness of his bodyguards only called attention to him. At the grocery store across the street, he was the talk of the checkout line. "Who's over at the barbershop?" "The FBI guy, what's-his-name." "No way!" People were coming out just to look.

Protecting our public servants is important, to be sure. But we have gotten so cranked up about security in the United States that senior officials travel in cocoons, as if they are surrounded by constant

threats. Every Cabinet secretary seems to have a security detail; so do governors and mayors and prominent legislators.

What are all these security folks protecting our officials from? Al-Qaida? Hezbollah? Crazy people? Aggrieved constituents? Or is it something more ephemeral — a nameless, pervasive sense of danger that may suddenly assault the secretary of Energy or the governor of New Jersey?

What I encountered at the local barbershop was a small example of the general security mania that seized the country after Sept. 11, 2001. So here's a suggestion: This September, as we mark the eighth anniversary of 9/11, let's resolve to dial back the paranoia meter a notch.

The hyper-security has added as much to public fear (and annoyance) as to public safety. The Transportation Security Administration is so pervasive now at airports that we forget how bizarre it is to see old ladies and pregnant mothers and 8-year-old kids frisked and searched as if they just arrived from Waziristan. Does this really make sense?

The security culture has its own momentum, wiping away other values, such as openness or privacy. These days, you can't get into any self-respecting building in Washington, public or private, without showing identification and signing a visitors' log. When I went to give a talk at the National Defense University last week, it was like entering the Green Zone in Baghdad. They made me open the trunk, the hood and all four doors — and that was after my license plate number had been pre-cleared.

The Secret Service has the most difficult security job in Washington, and also the most visible. You can hear the roar of the sirens each evening as the enormous motorcade of a dozen cars and a half-dozen motorcycles convey the vice president to his residence on Massachusetts Avenue. Maybe it's necessary to have so many cars, but it's a scene, frankly, that reminds me of Moscow during the Soviet days.

The Secret Service must deal with a re-

ported 3,000 threats a year against the president.

And al-Qaida aside, there are a lot of nut jobs out there who might like to harm the president and his family. That said, Secret Service officers can be among the rudest people in Washington. A White House chief of staff confided several years ago that he discovered their unfriendliness when he was stopped without his badge one day by an officer who didn't recognize him.

A few Secret Service personnel also seem to think that leaking embarrassing personal details about the president and his family is part of the assignment. (See the gossip-filled new book by Ron Kessler, "In the President's Secret Service," for leaks about the Bushes and Obamas.)

Making trade-offs isn't easy when it comes to security. But surely, we have reached the point of diminishing returns with the fortress mentality. The truth is, we all must live with vulnerability. It's a part of modern life. We need to take reasonable precautions, yes. But it would be good for our public officials to step out of the bubble occasionally and smell the roses — unfiltered by the security detail.

The next haircut is on me, Mr. Mueller, and if your security detail doesn't object, I'll show you around the neighborhood.

David Ignatius is a member of Washington Post Writers Group.



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

FBI Director Robert Mueller (shown on Capitol Hill in June) has a security detail that even accompanies him to the barbershop.

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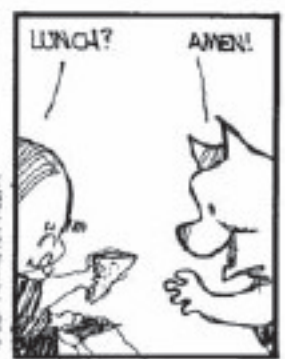
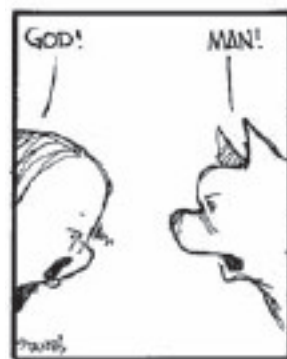
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By GARRY TRUDEAU

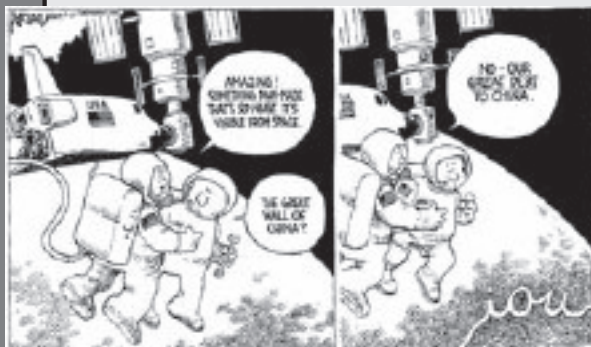
Prickly City



By SCOTT STANTIS

Looking at the news

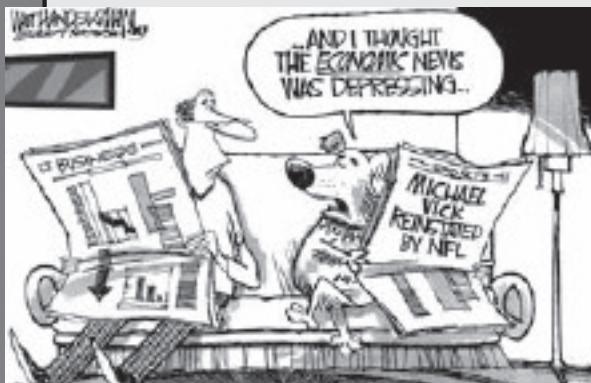
A weekly sampling of U.S. editorial cartoons



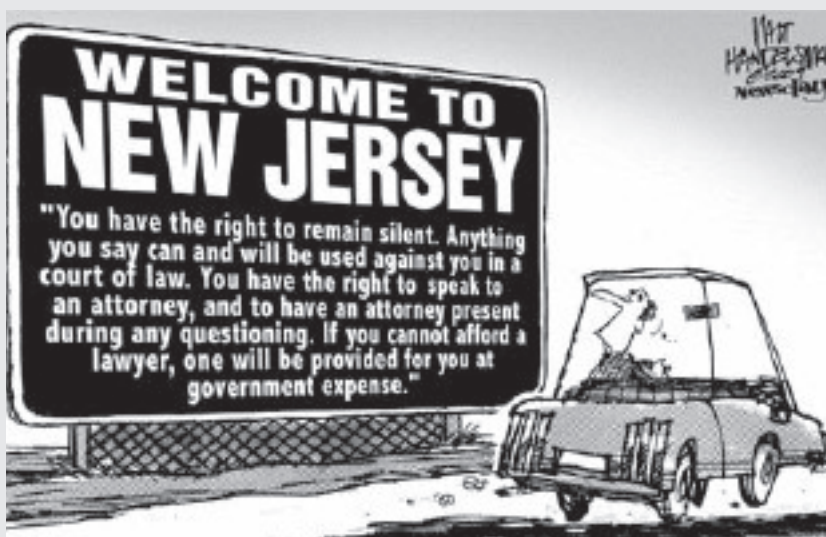
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WALT HANDELSMAN/Tribune Media Services



DICK LOCHER/Tribune Media Services

YOUR MONEY

VA grapples with quality-of-life payments

Monthly compensation that the Department of Veterans Affairs pays to veterans with service-connected disabilities is intended to replace average earnings loss due to their injuries or ailments.

But should VA also pay disabled veterans something extra for diminished quality of life? Two prominent commissions in 2007 said that it should. On Wednesday, however, a senior VA official told senators that the department isn't prepared yet to endorse a quality-of-life payment, or to make any other significant change to disability compensation.

"There's more information that's needed, and ... more discussion that needs to take place with many experts before we are prepared to say yes or no on any of those recommendations," said Patrick W. Dunne, undersecretary for benefits in VA's Veterans

Benefits Administration.

Sen. Richard Burr of North Carolina, ranking Republican on the veterans' affairs committee, raised the issue in a hearing on a different topic: What is VA doing to speed the processing of a rising number of disability claims?

Burr noted that VA just last year commissioned a study, by Economic Systems of Falls Church, Va., on appropriate levels of disability pay to compensate for loss of earning capacity and quality of life as a result of service-related disabilities. That six-month study was to follow up on recommendations from both the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission and the Dole-Shalala Commission in 2007 to reform disability compensation.

The benefits commission, in its comprehensive report, concluded that VA disability pay was too low for three categories of veterans: those who suffer from mental dis-

MILITARY UPDATE

Tom Philpott

abilities; those severely injured while young; and those deemed unemployable (i.e., rated IU or Individual Unemployability) by VA.

The commission also said current disability pay should reflect the "adverse impact ... on quality of life" of veterans' disabilities. Commissioners recognized that some severely injured veterans are paid a Special Monthly Compensation on top of VA disability pay. But they said the VA rating schedule should be revised to compensate many more veterans for diminished quality of life. In the interim, the commission said, Congress should increase VA disability compensation immediately by 25 percent.

The Dole-Shalala panel focused its recommendations on wounded warriors and veterans who were in service after the attacks of 9/11.

It recommended restructuring their VA disability compensation into three parts: transition payments to cover short-term living expenses for disabled vets and their families; earning loss payments until veterans become eligible for social security, and a quality-of-life payment to compensate for effects of permanent combat-related injuries that are not work-related.

The study by Economic Systems, delivered last August, looked at VA disability compensation with regard to earnings loss, loss of quality of life, transition benefits and other areas raised by the two commissions.

To ensure that VA didn't ignore the findings, the Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2008 directed VA to evaluate the EconSys study and, in a report to Congress, give a timeline and a list of legislative changes needed to make any worthy disability pay reforms.

VA's assessment of the EconSys study arrived on Capitol Hill on July 22.

"But I don't see any planned actions or timelines laid out in the VA's report," Burr told Dunne a week later. "Could you clarify whether VA plans to take any actions in response to that study?"

Dunne said EconSys did a good job considering its six-month deadline, but much more information and debate is needed before VA can back changes.

For VA or Congress to act based on the "truly national policy recommendations" found in the EconSys study, which relied on insufficient cost and earnings data, "would not be serving our veterans properly," Dunne said.

In reading VA's evaluation of the \$3.2 million EconSys study, it's easy to see why VA officials are cautious. It's a mixed bag for veterans.

Some options are quite costly but might help many veterans.

Others, like one calling for IU compensation eligibility to end in old age, would save VA money but anger many veterans. VA calls some of the recommendations "inconsistent with the nation's obligations to its wounded warriors."

EconSys presented three options for compensating for loss of quality of life. The easiest to understand would create a standard additional payment based on a veteran's combined degree of disability.

Payments would be set by assigning a quality-of-life score to the degree of disability.

"The report used several factors in coming up with the score, but also found that the overall quality of life varies greatly among veterans with the same disability rating, depending on the body system involved," VA warned.

A second option would create a separate pay scale for loss of quality of life, based on a veteran's combined degree of disability and primary disability. Certain disabilities would be associated with greater quality-of-life loss than others.

That might result in veterans with a lower combined degree of disability getting a higher quality-of-life payment, VA said.

A third option would have VA conduct individual clinical and rating assessments and establish separate, empirically-based rates for loss of earnings and loss of quality of life.

The VA medical exam would have to be expanded to include a rating to assess a wide range of quality-of-life criteria.

EconSys estimated the annual cost of each of its quality-of-life payment options would be in a range of between \$10 billion and \$30 billion.

Burr urged Dunne to consult with VA Secretary Eric Shinseki and then tell Congress what the next step should be.

Burr noted that both major commissions saw a need to "move to a system that compensates for the loss of quality of life."

That course was favored too, for a time, within VA and Congress. That momentum to help veterans shouldn't be lost, Burr said.

To comment, e-mail milupdate@aol.com, write to Military Update, P.O. Box 231111, Centreville, VA, 20120-1111 or visit: www.militaryupdate.com.

WEDNESDAY'S MARKET SUMMARY

INDEXES									
52-week		Name	Last	Net Chg	% Chg	YTD % Chg	52-wk	High	Low
High	Low								
11,867.11	6,469.95	Dow Jones Industrials	9,070.72	-26.00	-29	+3.35	-21.69	5,293.41	2,134.21
5,293.41	2,134.21	Dow Jones Transportation	3,506.95	-16.49	-47	-85	-31.17	489.85	288.66
489.85	288.66	Dow Jones Utilities	369.23	-1.37	-37	-41	-24.43	8,565.40	4,181.75
8,565.40	4,181.75	NYSE Composite	6,280.57	-48.10	-76	+9.09	-26.67	2,189.30	1,130.47
2,189.30	1,130.47	Amex Index	1,671.94	-1.22	-07	+19.64	-23.53	2,473.20	1,265.52
2,473.20	1,265.52	Nasdaq Composite	1,967.76	-7.75	-39	+24.78	-15.54	1,313.15	666.79
1,313.15	666.79	S&P 500	975.15	-4.47	-46	+7.96	-24.07	828.09	397.97
828.09	397.97	S&P MidCap	619.13	-4.24	-68	+15.02	-24.00	13,382.96	6,772.29
13,382.96	6,772.29	Wilshire 5000	10,025.99	-57.23	-57	+10.33	-23.48	764.38	342.59
764.38	342.59	Russell 2000	548.38	-3.57	-65	+9.80	-23.72		

NYSE				AMEX				NASDAQ			
MOST ACTIVE (\$1 OR MORE)				MOST ACTIVE (\$1 OR MORE)				MOST ACTIVE (\$1 OR MORE)			
Name	Vol (00)	Last	Chg	Name	Vol (00)	Last	Chg	Name	Vol (00)	Last	Chg
Citigrp	9508764	3.22	+25	InnovBio	301610	3.18	+2.44	PwShs QQQ	1204121	39.33	+25
BkofAm	2542709	13.52	+18	PSCRUDE	132013	4.12	-3.41	Yahoo	1113764	15.14	-2.08
SPDR	1758147	97.65	-24	Hemisphx	2213	2.25	-09	Microsoft	696533	23.80	+33
SprintNex	1320902	4.05	-54	Sinovac	39723	5.15	+35	Intel	488434	19.40	+03
SPDR Fnd	936183	12.59	-26	Tascko	27213	2.03	-11	FifthThird	394460	8.90	+34
GenElec	778997	12.26	-55	ChinaGrn	24007	10.73	+69	Cisco	329478	21.72	-21
ForM	718173	7.12	-02	Eldoridg	20978	9.30	+10	HumGen	288307	14.71	+08
Pfizer	600861	15.75	-28	AltaStMAC	19277	9.60	-21	Novavax	269253	4.75	+49
ISHMkts	496155	34.75	-80	ProspectAcq	16653	9.74	-01	ApldMatl	210345	13.61	+23
WellsFargo	472559	24.38	-14	GoldStrg	15700	2.11	-09	HuntBnk	209856	3.89	-12

KEY DEFENSE STOCKS					
Name	Div	PE	Last	Chg	YTD %Chg
Alliant Technosystem	...	18	78.36	-38	-8.6
Boeing	1.68	14	43.37	+12	+1.6
Computer Sciences	...	7	47.95	+23	+36.5
General Dynamics	1.52	9	54.55	+81	+5.3
General Electric	40	9	12.26	-26	-24.3
Halliburton	36	18	21.60	-40	-18.8
Harris Corp.	80	13	31.61	-06	-12.2
Allied Signal	1.21	11	34.04	-11	+3.7
L-3 Communications	1.40	10	73.92	+31	+2
Lockheed Martin	2.28	10	74.71	-36	-11.1
Northrop	1.72	...	44.96	+112	-2
Raytheon	1.24	11	46.57	+27	-8.8
Rockwell Intl.	1.16	18	40.81	+119	+26.6
Texas Instruments	44	31	24.14	+06	+55.5
Textron Inc.	08	...	12.79	-32	-7.8
United Technologies	1.54	12	53.20	+76	-7

KEY MUTUAL FUNDS							
Name	NAV	Chg.	%Ret.	NAV	YTD %Ret.		
Fidelity Invest: GroCo	58.85	-42	+20.2	Fidelity Spartan: EqlDxInv	34.51	-15	+9.6
Fidelity Invest: USBI	10.90	+01	+3.4	Fidelity Invest: Ourswa	28.20	-15	+12.4
Fidelity Invest: GroInc	14.15	-09	+8.0	Fidelity Invest: Almgro50	12.53	-04	+17.2
Amer Century Inv: Ultra	16.80	-05	+16.3	Putnam Funds A: GRNAP	10.37	-06	+11.5
AIM Investments A: CharA p	13.19	-03	+13.6	AIM Investments A: Const p	18.10	+01	+7.5
Frank/Temp Frnk A: SMCpGrA	24.66	-02	+21.5	DWS Invest S: GroIncS	12.45	-07	+14.5
DWS Invest S: GroIncS	18.07	-13	+7.7	Fidelity Advisor T: EdnT	23.68	-18	+24.4
Fidelity Advisor T: GrOppT	39.55	-32	+14.1	DWS Invest S: Intl Fds	7.29	-05	+14.4
Putnam Funds A: GblEqty p	13.38	-10	+26.1	Fidelity Advisor T: OvrseasT	14.78	-10	+10.1
Lord Abbett A: DevGTA p	10.01	+02	+6.2	DWS Invest S: CorpBnk	10.01	+02	+6.2

PRECIOUS METALS					
New York Merc close					
Gold	...	...	...	...	\$927.20
Silver	...	...	...	...	\$13.253

INTEREST RATES					
Prime rate	...	...	...	...	3.25
Discount rate	...	...	...	...	0.50
Federal funds market rate	...	...	...	...	0.00-0.25
3-month bill	...	...	...	...	0.19
30-year bond	...	...	...	...	4.51
Sources: Bank of America, The Associated Press					

GAS PRICES

Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Japan/Okinawa	...	\$2.470	...	\$2.373
Change in price	...	+ 3.4 cents	...	+ 3.2 cents
South Korea	\$2.596	...	\$2.837	\$2.621
Change in price	+ 4.0 cents	...	+ 3.0 cents	+ 3.2 cents
Guam	\$2.689*	\$2.809	\$2.929	...
Change in price	+ 4.0 cents	+ 3.0 cents	+ 3.0 cents	...

For the week of July 25 - 31 * Midgrade

Delphi nearing exit from four-year bankruptcy

NEW YORK — A judge on Thursday approved Delphi Corp.'s plan to hand control of the big auto parts supplier to its lenders and soon end a nearly four-year stay under bankruptcy protection.

U.S. Judge Robert Drain said the plan is in the best interests of both Delphi and its stakeholders, especially given the challenges the parts maker has faced recently as a result of the turmoil in the credit markets and the crumbling of the U.S. auto industry.

Drain's approval paves the way for Delphi to emerge from

bankruptcy protection.

The Troy, Mich.-based company has set a target date of Aug. 31 for emerging and expects to be out by Sept. 30 at the latest.

Delphi, General Motors' former parts division, was spun off from the automaker in 1999 and filed for bankruptcy in October 2005.

The supplier still produces about 10 percent of the parts used in GM's global production, and its components go into nearly all of GM's North American production lines.

From The Associated Press

Horoscope

What would you do for love? You may be surprised at how your actions answer this question over the next few days as Venus opposes Pluto. Unexpected events will cause you to consider the depth of your feelings. Many people will discover that they are far more committed, creative and determined to make things work than they thought.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (AUGUST 1). You deeply appreciate when things work, and that's why your relationships, as well as your professional and domestic life, arrive at a positive place. A stroke of good fortune in August improves your domestic scene. September brings a chance to see a new section of the world. There will be a windfall in December. Cancer and Pisces adore you.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). It might seem to others that you have more requests, needs and specifications than usual. That's because you are customizing your experience to suit your needs and wishes — as you should!

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You'll be bored unless you figure out early in the day what's in it for you. So be a little selfish. Sift through your hopes, dreams and aspirations and see how they match up with what's going on around you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). It is natural to view the world based on what you want it to be and to notice all the ways in which it falls short. Today, you view things how they actually are and enjoy them all the more.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). With too much on your plate, you simply can't concentrate on doing what you really want to do. Make new rules that will help you to focus your energy on what's most important to you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Worry can only weaken you, so disallow it for the day. Do whatever you have to do to stay on the sunny side. Adding a

favorable activity to your agenda may be all it takes to help you stay in a fantastic mood.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Center your creative mind around gaining publicity for your business, cause or project. Ideas are plentiful and out of the dozens you come up with, you'll have one or two truly great ones.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Your recent "kick" is on the decline. Maybe it's a food you were craving for the last few weeks that now seems less appealing or a fun activity that has gotten quickly stale. Time for some new influences!

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You'll be dealing with people who are different from your usual group. You sort out who's who and categorize the personalities to the best of your ability. You quickly figure out what you have to do to make things work.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You can command the weather all you want, but it's still going to do its own thing. Your best bet is to be prepared for any scenario you can dream up and keep a flexible attitude. Your mantra: Resistance is futile.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You'll be in the midst of negotiation and change, so it's important to remember: No one has more or less power than you. You are on equal footing with your fellows. Act only when you feel calm and confident.

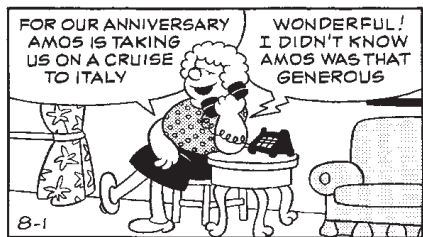
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Someone in your family might not deserve your faith, but make the leap anyway. Err on the side of generosity and good will. It will be a positive move for you that you will never regret.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). You have a habit of giving more than required for the situation at hand — and what a lovely habit that is. Keep going in this manner and you may very well become famous for your big-spirited ways.

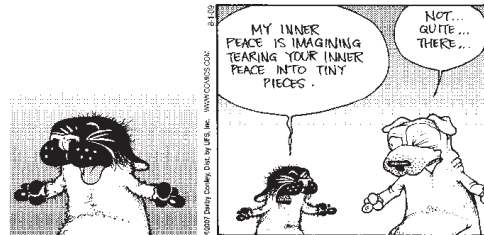
Holiday Mathis



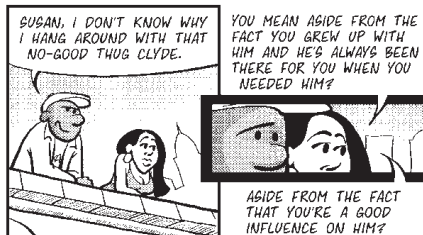
Beetle Bailey



Get Fuzzy



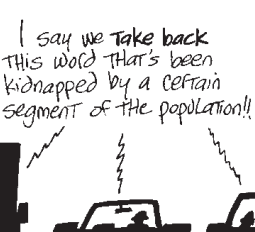
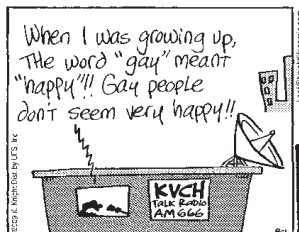
Candorville



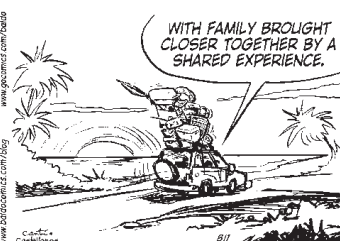
Meaning of Lila



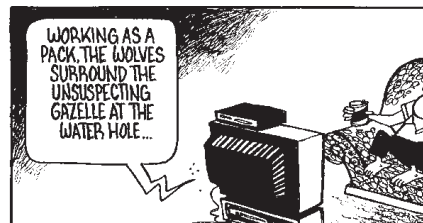
Knight Life



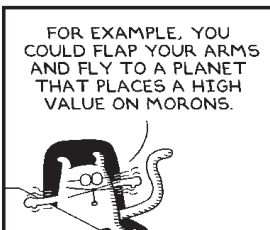
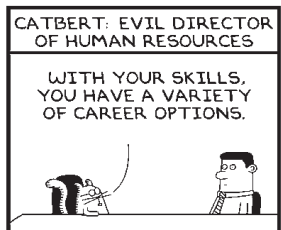
Baldo



Other Coast



Dilbert



SUDOKU

6	1			3			9	
			4		2	3		
4	3	2	8					
	6	5		1				
7			2	8				1
		4		3			2	
	1							7
	5			4	9			
		3	6					5

Difficulty: Medium

Fill in the boxes so that each row, column and 3-by-3 square includes the digits 1 through 9. For solution, tips and computer program, see www.sudoku.com

Yesterday's solution

8	1	6	5	2	4	3	7	9
5	4	9	2	7	8	1	3	6
2	7	3	1	9	8	4	6	5
1	2	4	8	6	3	7	5	9
9	5	7	2	4	3	6	8	1
6	3	8	7	5	1	2	9	4
7	3	2	6	3	5	1	4	8
4	6	5	8	1	9	7	2	3
3	8	1	4	7	2	9	6	5

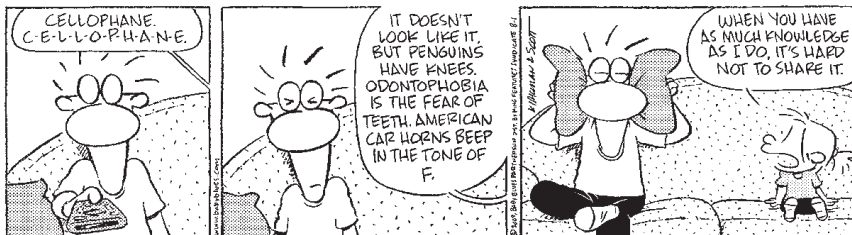
Frazz



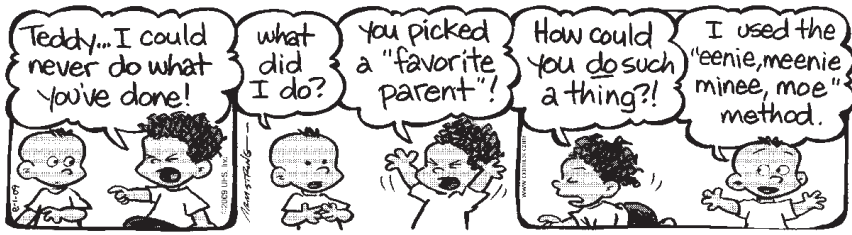
Garfield



Baby Blues



Jump Start



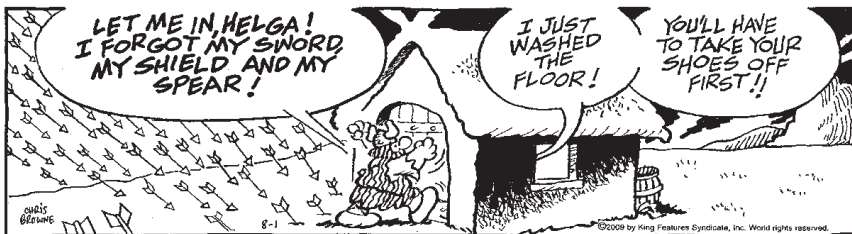
Zits



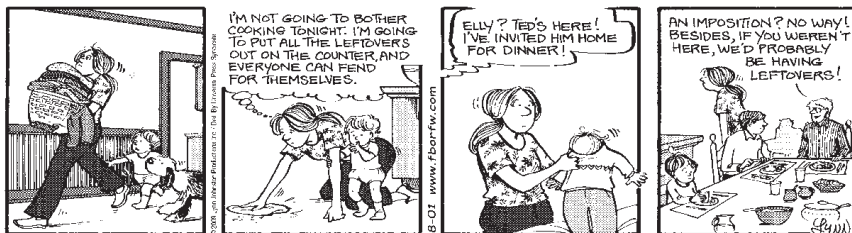
Red & Rover



Hagar



Better or Worse



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11
12					13					14		
15					16					17		
18					19					20		
				21	22			23	24			
25	26	27						28			29	30
32								33				
34								35	36			
				37				38				
39	40	41						42	43		44	45
48								49			50	
51								52			53	
54								55			56	

ACROSS

- 1 Others like it
- 5 Impulse
- 9 Piping material, for short
- 12 Largest of the seven
- 13 Carrots' mates
- 14 Lubricant
- 15 Approach
- 16 Iodine source
- 17 Actress Thompson
- 18 Let gravity take over
- 19 Tokyo's old name
- 20 Lascivious
- 21 Indivisible
- 23 Hot tub
- 25 Get back
- 28 Laundry container
- 32 Obsess
- 33 "Manswers" network
- 34 Round-the-world trips?
- 36 High
- 37 Big Apple letters
- 38 Author Buscaglia
- 39 Swampy area, for short
- 42 Time of your life?
- 44 Bloodhound's pride
- 48 Spigoted vessel
- 49 Risqué
- 50 Mountain goat
- 51 Hubbub

DOWN

- 11 Dressed
- 20 Satirist's work
- 22 Eccentric
- 24 Stickum
- 25 Pi follower
- 26 Anvil locale
- 27 Young lion
- 29 Wrestling victory
- 30 — out a living
- 31 Roulette bet
- 35 Libra
- 36 Like some winter roads
- 39 Campus area
- 40 Pakistan language
- 41 In due time
- 43 Get overemotional
- 45 Do as you're told
- 46 Burn some
- 47 Public show
- 49 Support system?

Answer to Previous Puzzle

A	L	L	F	A	T	E	S	T	O	W
S	E	A	O	V	E	R	P	A	P	A
S	A	N	G	U	I	N	E	R	U	E
			G	O	L	D		H	I	T
A	P	S	E	S			S	W	A	N
G	U	Y	S		S	L	E	I	G	H
U	R	N		C	H	A	N	G		A
E	L	E	P	H	A	N	T		K	N
			Y	E	G			L	O	G
V	A	U	L	T			K	A	L	E
O	R	S	O		K	A	N	G	A	R
T	E	E	N		O	R	E	O		O
E	A	R	S		I	C	E	S		N

8-1

CRYPTOQUIP

YBVN YEPKU SEP AVKK V
TNDXQDXQ DXTHAN NBVN
NHXUT NE IH AKPZTS YDNB V

WEENIVKK? V WPZIKH IHH.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHOLESOME SITCOM
CONCERNING A SUBURBAN FAMILY BOY WITH
GREAT FAITH: "LEAVE IT TO BELIEVER."
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals B

Daughter rebuffs words of comfort

Dear Abby: My father was murdered. I am dealing with it the best I can. I appreciate that people want to extend their condolences, but I have started letting my phone go directly to voice mail because I just can't handle hearing, "You're in my prayers," or, "This is all part of some plan." I want to be left alone!

I am angry, Abby, and I don't want to take it out on people who care about me. One of my in-laws has been telling me I need to "suck it up" and allow others the privilege of trying to make me feel better. I think I have the right to grieve in the manner I choose. Who is correct?

— **Grief-Stricken in California**
Dear Grief-Stricken: YOU are! Your in-law's comment was incredibly insensitive. Under the circumstances, your feelings are normal, part of the grieving process, and nobody has the right to tell you how to work through it.

Dear Abby



Dear Abby: Over the past two years my daughter and son-in-law have lost a lot of weight. They, as well as my grandsons, eat very little and don't like being put in the position of having to order food.

My problem is not knowing how to celebrate without food. When I think of holidays, I think of a family meal. Any ideas?

— **Stumped in Sacramento**

Dear Stumped: You're not alone in associating food with socializing. Eating is so ingrained in our culture it seems to have become our national pastime. However, it doesn't have to be that way.

Rather than plan a meal, invite your daughter and her family to a movie, sporting event — even a short hike, if you're up to it. And if you feel you must serve something, offer to bring along a healthy snack, such as fruit

or veggies, that they can enjoy if they get the munchies.

Dear Abby: My husband is a wonderful man with many interests and activities. We have an active social life and friends of all ages. My problem is he constantly tells everyone about his ailments, medications and medical issues no matter how big or small.

I am uncomfortable with this topic because I don't feel these are things you bring up with people other than your family or your doctor. Am I wrong?

— **Mary in New Hampshire**

Dear Mary: You are correct. For the most part, casual acquaintances are not interested in hearing an "organ recital" when they ask the casual, "How are you?" In fact, sooner or later they avoid people who constantly complain and talk only about themselves. The popular person is the one who shows an interest in others.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.uepress.com/dearabby>
Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DONEM

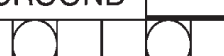


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NOYOL



CROONB



NEW Jumble iPhone App go to: www.bit.ly/15QkRq

LAFICA



Print answer here:



(Answers Monday)

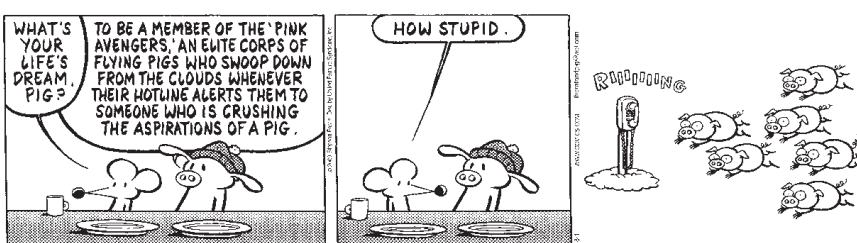
Yesterday's Jumbles: GUILLE LUNGE KNIGHT AIRWAY
Answer: When the sailors retrieved the ship's bell, it was — "RINGING" WET

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Mike Argirion and Jeff Knurek

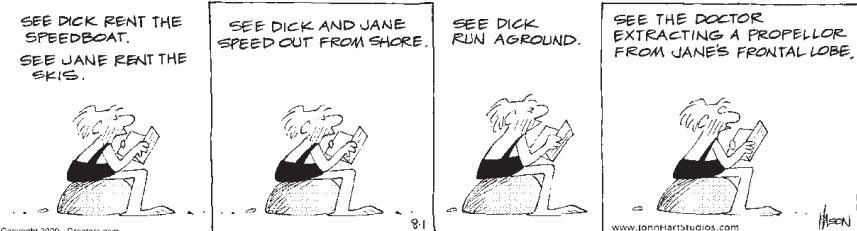


Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Pearls Before Swine



B.C.



Over The Hedge



Pardon My Planet



Non Sequitur



Strange Brew





After "Metal Gear Solid" first defined it, "Splinter Cell" essentially redefined the "stealth action" genre, and Sam Fisher has since become something of a gaming icon.

This fact was clearly not lost on its publisher. In the seven years since the release of the original, Ubisoft has released three more games (four if you count the PSP title released in 2006). And now Ubisoft Montreal is readying the latest in the series, and they've dubbed it "Conviction." Veterans will note that Mr. Fisher spent the last game evading authorities, diving deep undercover. Now he's being forced out of hiding to hunt down the drunk driver who killed his daughter. The journey spans the globe, from Malta to Washington, D.C., and represents a departure for the series. Rather than relying on an assortment of fantastic gadgetry, this game requires the player to make greater use of his environments, procuring makeshift items and weapons in the field from his allies and from disabled enemies.

"The first reason we moved away from [the gadgetry aspect] was because of the story. As Sam is not working for Third Echelon anymore, he doesn't have access to all their gadgets like he used to," says "Conviction" creative director, Max Beland.

"He uses what is available and improvises; it's interesting to see this bad-ass elite agent not having access to all his gadgets and being forced to rely on his skills and training to get the job done," Beland adds. To demonstrate, we're shown a scene in which Sam breaks off the rear-view mirror of his SUV to use as a makeshift snake cam. It's been hinted that, as the game progresses, many of Sam's favorite gadgets (like the sticky camera) will make cameos, along with some new, never-before-seen options (which may or may not include an EMP grenade).

Beyond such material concerns, however, "Conviction" finds new ground to excavate in terms of its approach to stealth gameplay. The "Mark and Execute" feature, for instance, requires the player to take cover and stealthily discern and observe the situation to locate key enemies. He can then mark his targets and, when ready, come out of position and place his hits in an extremely precise manner, bringing more realism to the experience than the series ever had before.



Another new feature, "Last Known Position," furthers this concept.

"It allows you to play a kind of cat-and-mouse game with your enemies," says Beland. "When you are spotted, a figure appears at the place where the enemies last saw you. You can then use this information to your advantage by developing new tactics." Finally, every single physical action that Sam can perform has been reworked from previous "Splinter Cell" games.

"We're redoing them while keeping in mind that we want the player to be fast, accurate and reactive to any situation,"

says Beland. "Sam is now faster and more brutal than ever."

Of course, none of this developmental rebirth has been easy. Initially scheduled for release in November 2007, the game is now finding its way to gamers a full two years later.

"The game was delayed because we changed the direction," explains Beland. "[The version] from a couple of years ago was focused around social stealth — hiding in the crowd. Although that was a very interesting approach, we felt it wasn't delivering the player fantasy of 'Splinter



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Cell' games and that we were too far away from our brand values."

In the last year and a half, the team has attempted to take on the series' core values and built on them, using existing technology and systems but reworking them to better fit with the game's new direction.

The "Splinter Cell" series has also been known for its presentation, even garnering the respect of "Metal Gear Solid" creator Hideo Kojima. To continue to keep par in this arena, the developers have changed the way they tell the game's story, primarily in order to keep the player immersed at all times.

"Navigating in a menu or reading six pages of text telling him what's happening in the story is not what we want to propose to the player," says Beland. "Instead, the team is concentrating on streamlining the experience, making sure one is always playing or being told the story in a way that's fluid, fast and immersive. In other words, don't expect any long, drawn-out cut scenes — in this regard, 'Conviction' is in many ways the anti-'Metal Gear Solid 4'."

The visual direction of the game has evolved as well: desaturated environments now surround Sam while he does his thing in the shadows, and certain objects or enemies retain their color in order to bring them to the player's attention — something meant not only to support the visual direction of the



Because SAM IS NOT RESTRAINED by the laws and rules of Third Echelon — remember, HE'S GONE ROGUE for this portion of the saga — the gameplay is also less restrictive than it has been in games past.

game, but also the gameplay. Beland also promises plenty of unique visual moments along the way — like the first time you experienced thermal vision earlier in the series.

Because Sam is not restrained by the laws and rules of Third Echelon — remember, he's gone rogue for this portion of the saga — the gameplay is also less restrictive than it has been in games past.

"You don't get a 'game over' because you are seen by a camera," says Beland. "You just need to live with the consequences of your actions." Same goes for the story; the team has built



various narrative tools to tell the story in real time. "What's really important for us is to keep the player holding the controller and playing the game as much as possible. For that purpose, we've created the projected texts, and seamless transitions between our locations to keep the player immersed in our

world." Multiplayer will also be a part of the experience, but that element is still being kept under wraps for the moment.

Indeed, it appears that "Conviction" is meant to be the ultimate vehicle for players to fulfill the fantasy of being Sam Fisher, the finest elite agent the world has to offer. "All our game design is focused with that in mind," says Beland. "We want the player to feel like the ultimate predator, like the bad-ass elite agent that Sam is and we've built a lot of different systems to support that."

Tradition and Authenticity



The "Splinter Cell" series (and Tom Clancy games in general) are known for their realism and adherence to tactical military principles. The same goes for "Conviction": many of the team members are Tom Clancy veterans, including Beland (this is his fourth Tom Clancy's game). The team is working with a tactical advisor that works for the National Security Agency (NSA)—meaning it's not just military knowledge that they're after, but also that of the security services. Additionally, they're enlisting the help of a Krav Maga specialist from Montreal to help define the game's motion capture, ensuring that the hand-to-hand combat comes across in a very authentic way. (Krav Maga is an Israeli martial art that Sam uses in close-quarter situations in the game).

GAMER

StripesGAMER.com to Feature Scott Steinberg as Columnist



Steinberg

Beginning this month, **StripesGAMER.com** welcomes prominent video gaming expert Scott Steinberg, who takes up the post of key contributing columnist.

Over a billion people have turned to Steinberg for insight into today's hottest electronic amusements. As publisher of DigitalTrends.com, he's a frequent on-air video game, gadget and consumer electronics authority for ABC, CBS, NBC and CNN, and has also appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times*, *Playboy*, *Rolling Stone* and *TV Guide*. Hailed as an expert by dozens of outlets from *BusinessWeek* to *Forbes*, CNN and NPR, Steinberg has written several authoritative books on our industry. Steinberg is widely seen as one of the high-tech and video game industries' most sought-after expert witnesses, DIY evangelists and advocates for continuing education.

His permanent spot on the site's homepage includes biweekly blogs that will bring the latest in gaming perspective to gamers in the military—only at **StripesGAMER.com!**

We've grown fivefold in the past four months ago and enjoyed our share of buzz at E3 in June. Tournaments and leagues are ongoing, and currently the

most popular platform is Xbox Live, although Wii, Playstation, and even PC games all have planned events and support on the roster for 2009.

Player Profile:

StripesGAMER.com salutes Neil Rodgers (username: HMF Regy) for his achievements and rankings on the site. Currently ranked #1, he's the man to beat! Neil plays five to six hours a day. His top games are "FIFA" and "Battlefield," and he plays on a 42-inch LCD screen! He is single—and working hard to transform his girlfriend into a gamer (he says it's working!)

Neil says it's "the military connection" that sets **StripesGAMER.com** apart from other gaming sites. He adds, "The military is a much more mature audience with a constant strategy in mind to win." He also comments that the most exciting part of the site to him are the drafts. "You don't know what team you are going to get on, but it's exciting!"



If you look up Neil's HMF Regy profile on **StripesGAMER.com**, here's what you'd find:

Achievement Points: 5,700

Achievement Level: "Up & Coming"

Commitment Level: "Live To Play"

Personality: "Win At All Costs"

He is always ready for more competition and loves how the site is growing!!

The crew:

John Allio
Brian Bowers
Ellen Cheung
Victoria Coleman

Doug Dougherty
Doug Gillam
Tony Haugan
Luisa Hernandez

Meg Irish
Dan Krause
Kenny Padmore
Joe Terry

Chris Verigan
Marie Woods

Unless otherwise indicated, all content is written by **StripesGAMER** staff with additional material provided by **StripesGAMER** readers.

WIN IT!!

Greetings, Gamers! In case you get the feeling things are a bit different...**Stripes GAMER** is coming at you in a new format for this issue. The **GAMER** team has been able to score some pages within the live edition of *Stars and Stripes*; by doing so, we can bring you the most up-to-date game information available. Let us know what you think!

The dog days of summer are upon us, so we've packed this issue full of some must-play titles to carry gaming wanderlust through until the official fall launch season. Starting the whole thing off this month, we've got the inside story from Ubisoft and its latest installment of the "Splinter Cell" franchise - some pretty nifty enhancements are in store!

We've also packed in a nice selection of reviews and previews as well as our increasingly popular "Top Ten" feature. If you haven't checked it out, or even (gasp) entered, now may be the time. The more participants we have, the better the prizes get (we need the masses to let the game companies know you guys are serious players!) Keep reading and join in the fun and remember creativity is king!

Now go on, get on with your gaming and we'll be back before you know it with the fall release preview.

Play like you mean it!

_Haugan

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UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS

Call of Duty: World at War

Madden '10

Madden '09

FIFA '09

FIFA '09 World Cup

Special thanks to Soldiers Angels for Wii gaming systems contributed for recent tournaments.

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Visit **Stripes GAMER.com** for more information. If your game is not currently supported, please email us at: support@stripesgamer.com

Givers are Winners

It's hot outside, so turn up the AC and let's talk about winning some games to expand your ever-growing supply!

You can win a prize by participating in Stripes GAMER's "Top 10 Must Play" feature — here's how to play:

We give you the category (favorite "Chill Out Games" in this case) and you go online to <http://www2.stripes.com/gamertop10> and dish out the name of your favorite game and why.

Or, if you are feeling low-tech, you can send us an email. Just make sure it includes answers to all six of the questions below, otherwise we'll have to discard your entry:

1. The title of your favorite "Chill Out Games"
2. The reason it's your favorite (250 words or less - be creative!)
3. Your favorite platform(s)
4. This statement: I have read and agree to the rules" posted on www.Stripes.com
5. Your name (first and last)
6. Your email (the one we'll use to notify you when/if you're a winner)

Make sure you answer ALL the questions! Incomplete entries are not eligible for prizes! We will disqualify people for not paying attention.

Every eligible entry received will be entered in a drawing. Four names will be drawn at random to receive one of four prize packages. Each package will consist of two games for a specific game console, as follows:

For Wii:
Guitar Hero Metallica
Ice Age Dawn of the Dinosaurs

For Xbox 360:
Vin Diesel Wheelman
Ice Age Dawn of the Dinosaurs

For PS2
Ice Dawn of the Dinosaurs
Transformers Revenge of the Fallen

For Nintendo DS
Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince
My Sims Racing

Enter online or email your entry to: games@stripes.com with "Top 10 Chill Out Games" in the subject line, no later than August 31, 2009. Winners will be notified on or about September 7, 2009. And, of course, there is no purchase necessary to enter or win. Reading the rules is advised, so you know what you are agreeing to in #4 above.

And game on!!!

Haugan

*To read the "Top 10 Must Play" rules, please visit www.Stripes.com and scroll down to click on Contest Rules in the footer.

PLAYER'S CLUB

The Top 10 Must Play PARTY GAMES EVER!

The votes are cast in this totally subjective and unscientific survey—and here are the results! And if you didn't participate, you got no vote!

10 Medal of Honor

Jose Rivera-Velez, 50, United States

Why: It will give you enjoyment, relaxation, knowledge, entertainment and develop your ability to interact with others.



9 Madden NFL

Erik Karpicke, 35, Afghanistan

Why: It is Madden Football! No explanation is necessary!

8 Street Fighter

Brian Henninger, 28, Iraq

Why: It builds the atmosphere up with competition! Every gamer is a competitor! If you get angry with someone, why not kick his butt? With Ryu, that is! If you win, you become proud of your accomplishments and therefore feel GREAT!



7 Gears of War

Jay Jung, 19, South Korea

Why: Unlike any other RPGs/Shooters, "Gears of War" is a stress RELIEVER, not an inducer; and the Horde mode keeps that adrenaline pumping! A must-play game!

6 Buzz

Stephen Cowne, 28, Afghanistan

Why: It's a game show. Everyone

Party Up?

Bejeweled Twist

Alain Brin, 42, Spain

Why: It is a great game! It makes people very competitive with other people in your house or different people. The only thing that is bad about it is you do not have an online leaderboard.



has his own buzzer, and instead of watching people on TV look like idiots, everyone at home gets to look like an idiot.

5 Mario Kart

Justin Rubio, 26, United Arab Emirates

Why: This game is a classic from the early Nintendo games and with the new Wii version, you can play with a large group or online with friends or even worldwide with strangers.



Mario Kart

Brian Neal, 40, Iraq

Why: I love this game because you can play online with different countries around the world.

4 Call of Duty

Joseph Cheney, 31, United States

Why: The last "Call of Duty" was awesome; very good graphics, has the same weapons we currently use. If the last one was good, this one has to be that much better.

Call of Duty 4

George Diggins, 27, Germany

Why: It draws on a guy's basic instinct to wreak controlled havoc and gives you the opportunity to progress through all the military ranks to access better gear to eradicate your friends.

Call of Duty 4

James Seymour, 20, Kuwait

Why: This game is one of the first FPS I've played where the toon you are dies with minimal shots, making it more realistic. It is tons of fun online. You can jump on for just a few minutes or a few hours and have plenty of fun.

3 Wii Bowling

Wendylea Dehart, 38, Qatar

Why: Because no matter what your level of gaming is, everyone can have a good time playing it!!!

Wii Sports

Jeremy Siegrist, 38, South Korea

Why: "Wii Sports" is a great package that brings together all ages. My three-year-old plays with his Grandmother! Who doesn't like Wii Bowling? All of the games are fun, intuitive and get people on their feet.



Wii Sports

Henry Arnold, 41, Iraq

Why: It has games for all ages and skill levels.

Wii figured...why not?

Wii Fit

Fred Partridge, 48, South Korea

Why: This game gets everyone involved in the fun. Children, adults, women and men will find this an exciting way to spend a few hours with friends and family.



2 Rock Band

Scott Ross, 36, Iraq

Why: "Rock Band" allows everyone to get involved, even if they have no musical ability. There are also enough versions of the game that everyone will know at least a few songs.

Kyle Von Jares, 24, Germany

Why: Because this game rocks! It doesn't require a whole lot of talent and still makes you sound amazing regardless! It's so fun to jam with a bunch of friends.

Dan Rodriguez, 34, South Korea

Why: Music combined with video games: great combination!

Greg Krenek, 35, Japan

Why: Great group game. Excellent song selection with downloads available. Has a "no-fail" option for new gamers or lower level groups.

Jen Krenek, 35, Japan



Why: It offers a variety of different instruments and songs. Some prefer singing while others like drums.

Gina Bradburn, 44, Germany

Why: Because everyone loves to do air guitar and sing like a rock star.

Jeffery Yelton, 39, Germany

Why: Excellent party game, with a sensible rotation (start on bass, then drums, then vocals and finally guitar). It can pull people out of their shell and be fun and entertaining for all.

Jeff Blackwell, 40, United Kingdom

Why: Uh, because it's pretty much the greatest game ever.

Walter Burke, 27, Iraq

Why: It's only fitting that Metallica would finally get its own "Guitar Hero," since they have some of the best guitar sections in recent rock music history.

Frank Lewis, 21, Germany

Why: Metallica is truly an American band loved the world over! Creating a video game that features their songs, and get to play them... how much better could it get!? I agree with you Stars and Stripes, Activision does rock!

1 Guitar Hero

Erica Clarkson, 40, Iraq

Why: I would like to share it with my unit in Iraq. I think it would be a great way to lift morale.

Dustin Geiss, 28, United States

Why: Because this is by far the funniest game franchise to play.

Graylin Jamerson, 25, Japan

Why: This is a great game that I purchased for my little brother and sister. It helped us bond in a short time.

Craig Tayman, 39, United States

Why: Who doesn't love to thrash with '80s classics? Going head-to-head on some great songs is a fantastic way to pass the time!

Jim West, 32, Kuwait

Why: This game allows anyone to feel like a rock star, albeit for a few minutes. It is a great party game because of the great music and interaction between game and players.

Rocky Cole, 38, Afghanistan

Why: "Guitar Hero" is the best party game because everyone loves music. The variable difficulty levels allow anyone to feel like a rock star by jamming out to their favorite songs. The multi-player options add to the excitement.

Christopher Natale, 32, Germany

Why: It rocks

Joshua Nolan, 35, Kuwait

Why: Because the whole family can play together. My seven-year-old son and I play the guitars all the time when I'm not deployed. My daughter is dying to play the drums. "Guitar Hero World Tour" is built for complete family and friends entertainment!

Lennie Sims, 37, Kuwait

Why: This game lets up to four people play at the same time. It also lets you act out your "inner rock star"!! Can you say "Living Room Karaoke"?

Mary Rice, 39, United States

Why: Because it has turned out to be better than "Rock Band", at least to me. I enjoy playing this game, as



Honorable Mentions

SOCOM

Ryan Stapp, 29, United States

Why: I could play it with my family and friends.

do my kids. We play this nearly all the time, every day. The kids love the older songs, and it is a blast.

Zacharias Thorpe, 26, United States

Why: "Guitar Hero" rocks. My wife and I play it all the time. You get lost in the songs and it takes you back to the good old days.

Daniel Tolle, 32, Iraq

Why: It's the perfect way to get people together and have fun. All ages and levels can play, which makes it great for family get-togethers as well as a night with friends.

Christopher Thomson, 31, Kuwait

Why: Heck, yes it does. The game play and abilities to play the game

Any War Games

Damara Mautz, 32, United States

Why: If you like music, it's great and it tests your eye and hand coordination.

are awesomely vast. A beginner is able to pick up the controller and play right next to an expert. The most important feature of this game is the music. METALLICA ROCKS!

Alan West, 45, United States

Why: Now, who doesn't fantasize about being a rock star or playing in the band? And Metallica is at the TOP of rock bands. For most this is as close as it comes and with a group of people (adults or kids) you're guaranteed to have fun.

Tracy Stamper, 22, United States

Why: Awesome game and can be played by anyone no matter what level of player he or she is.

Vickie Hicks, 29, Kuwait

Why: Everyone wants to be a rock star and now everyone gets a chance to rock.

Richard Austin, 34, United States

Why: This game is awesome! My kids and I play it all the time. We all have a good time. Great songs and you can download more songs other than what comes on the game. I cannot wait to get home from deployment and play again. Great game!

Robert Brenizer, 39, Germany

Why: It is the best game for any gaming system.

Next Issue Chill Out GAMES

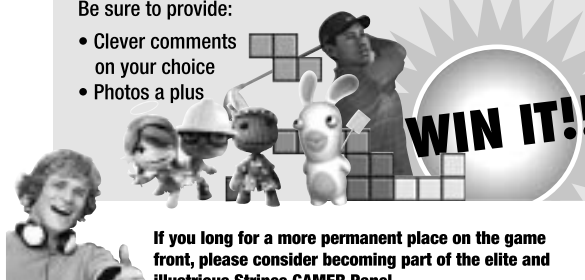
GAMERS,

Let's face it. How often do you come home and want to play a game that requires very little effort? A game you're not looking to conquer. It's just all about chilling out.

What **Chill Out Game** do you feel should make the next **Top 10** list. Give us your #1 pick.

Be sure to provide:

- Clever comments on your choice
- Photos a plus



If you long for a more permanent place on the game front, please consider becoming part of the elite and illustrious Stripes GAMER Panel.

On The Radar

Releasing in August/September 2009

G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra

Madden NFL 10

Guitar Hero 5

WET

Dirt 2

Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs

IL-2: Sturmovik: Birds of Prey

Marvel: Ultimate Alliance 2

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GAMER's Hot List

G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra

Publisher:
Electronic Arts

Genre:
Action

ESRB:
Teen

August 4

As COBRA unleashes its deadliest plot yet, the G.I. JOE Team is counting on you and your hand-picked team of heroes to lead the counterattack. Every mission is critical and so is every G.I. JOE character. Picking up where the Paramount Pictures live action film leaves off, "G.I. JOE The Rise of Cobra" is an accessible third-person action-arcade shooter that allows players to re-create and relive the greatest moments from the film, cartoon series and action toy line. The all-new storyline draws from 45 years of rich G.I. JOE history.

Two player co-op lets players choose an elite team and call in support from other G.I. JOE characters. Characters are classified



into one of three units: Commandos who do well at close range, Heavys who possess extraordinary shooting skills but do it best from a distance and Combat Soldiers who are a balance between the two. Gear up with the latest in high-tech gadgets like the film-inspired Accelerator Suit which makes you invincible and gives you short bursts of additional fire power.

GAMER



Dirt 2

Publisher:
Codemasters

Genre:
Racing

ESRB:
Pending

September 8

"DiRT 2" features a roster of contemporary off-road events, taking players to the most diverse and challenging real-world environments. This World Tour will have players competing in aggressive multi-car and intense solo races at extraordinary new locations, from canyon racing and jungle trails to stadium-based events.

Career paths will span the globe. Events include a rally cross in the massive Los Angeles sports stadium's "Stadium King Shootout," edge-of-control canyon racing of Utah's "Creek Trailblazer" event and the "Rawang Rally Run" along Malaysian rainforest tracks.

"DiRT 2" invites players to become part of an extreme sports community, with full online multiplayer race events and community integration across multiple disciplines.

GAMER



PC

Section 8

Publisher:
SouthPeak Games

Genre:
First-Person Shooter

ESRB:
Pending

August 25

An intense first-person shooter, "Section 8" allows players to dynamically alter the flow of combat as they see fit. Employing tactical assets and on-demand vehicle

deliveries, players are given unprecedented strategic control over epic sci-fi battlefields.

On the war-torn planets of tomorrow, mankind's greatest battle is about to begin. With its frontier colonies devastated by a growing insurrection, Earth dispatches the elite 8th Armored Infantry (nicknamed "Section 8") to repel the coming onslaught.

"Section 8" deploys by "burning in" from their orbital drop ships miles above the battlefield, utilizing the most advanced arsenal of military hardware known to man. Their mission: to scout and secure difficult objectives and smash enemy defenses in lightning-quick assaults.

GAMER



Star Wars: The Clone Wars – Republic Heroes

Publisher:
LucasArts

Genre:
Action

ESRB:
Teen

September 15

"Star Wars The Clone Wars: Republic Heroes" lets "Star Wars" fans young and old live out the sweeping galactic adventures of the Clone Wars.

A brand-new storyline, which bridges the gap between season one and two, takes the player on a multi-faceted adventure to stop a mysterious techno assassin's destructive plot. Built around two-player cooperative action, fans fight the evil Separatists and restore peace to the galaxy.

GAMER



Marvel: Ultimate Alliance 2

Publisher:
Activision

Genre:
Action RPG

ESRB:
Pending

September 15

"Marvel: Ultimate Alliance 2" is an all-new action/RPG where players create their Marvel dream team from

the largest roster of Super Heroes ever. It's an epic quest that will determine the fate of Earth and the Marvel universe.

For decades, Earth's Super Heroes have opposed evil in their own cities, and on their own terms. But now, Dr.

Doom and a newly reformed Masters of Evil – the greatest collection of Super Villains ever assembled – have plans for world domination, and the heroes must band together to defeat them.

Playing as some of the most revered Marvel characters, gamers will embark on a dangerous journey across exotic terrain and well-known comic book locations, such as Atlantis, the Shield Heli-Carrier and the Skrull home world, in



an attempt to defy the world's most notorious Super Villains. Created by Raven Software, "Ultimate Alliance 2" lets players control the most powerful Super Hero alliance the world has ever known.

GAMER



GAMER's Hot List

Wolfenstein

Publisher:
Activision
Genre:
First Person
Shooter
ESRB:
Mature
August 18

Unfolding in a historical/ fictional World War setting, players take on the role of the heroic OSA agent BJ Blazkowicz

as they are thrust into the unknown and unexpected to battle against combat troops, otherworldly forces, and the dark science created by a supernatural Nazi force hell-bent on world domination.

"Wolfenstein" offers players an action-packed experience as they investigate the powers of a dark parallel dimension, join with resistance forces, and employ an arsenal of conventional and other-worldly weapons in attempts to annihilate the Nazi war machine. "Wolfenstein" provides gamers with an assortment of interlinked missions that power an intense, story-driven combat experience.

GAMER



Katamari Forever

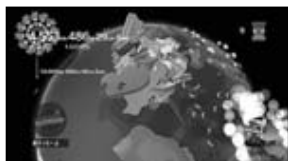
Publisher:
Namco Bandai
Genre:
Action
ESRB:
Pending
September 22

The Prince faces his toughest challenge ever as "Katamari Forever" boasts the largest collection of stages, modes, songs and cousins to

date. Remixed classic "Katamari Damacy" tunes, a brand-new storyline, multiple new visual effects and 1080p graphics round out "Katamari Forever" into the ultimate Katamari experience.

A terrible event has occurred causing the stars to disappear from the night sky and the King of All Cosmos to fall into a coma. The Prince must use his finely tuned Katamari rolling skills once more to re-create the absent celestial bodies, save his royal father and restore order to the Cosmos. Nothing is safe as the Prince makes his way through the largest variety of stages in a single Katamari game ever.

GAMER



Madden NFL 10

Publisher:
Electronic Arts
Genre:
Sports
ESRB:
Everyone
August 14

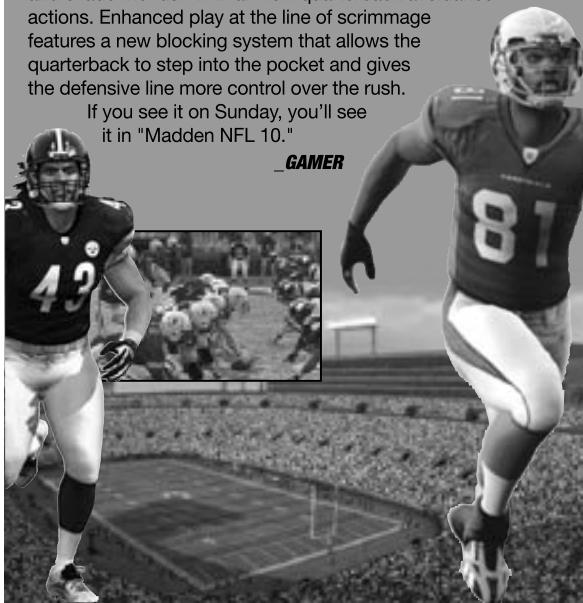
Experience first-hand what it's like to Fight for Every Yard in "Madden NFL 10." With the all-new Pro-Tak animation

technology, players have more control over the outcome of each play. Whether driving a receiver towards the first down, or battling for a fumble at the bottom of a pile, the play won't end until the whistle blows.

Drag defenders toward the first-down marker, including up to 9-man gang tackles, fight for a fumble at the bottom of the pile, and evade the rush with all-new quarterback avoidance actions. Enhanced play at the line of scrimmage features a new blocking system that allows the quarterback to step into the pocket and gives the defensive line more control over the rush.

If you see it on Sunday, you'll see it in "Madden NFL 10."

GAMER



PORTABLES

SoulCalibur: Broken Destiny

Publisher:
Namco Bandai
Genre:
Fighting
ESRB:
Pending
September 1

"Soulcalibur: Broken Destiny" is the latest entry in the "Soul-Calibur" series. "Broken Destiny" is the series' first release on the

PSP system and is the first portable iteration of "SoulCalibur." Robust and challenging single-player modes, head-to-head

multiplayer and gorgeous visuals make this a must-have for any fighting game fan!

Challenge the computer AI or compete against your friends in the Vs. Mode through Ad-Hoc. Blow away your competition using finely tuned and enhanced battle mechanics including Critical Finishes, Soul Crushes and Equipment Destruction.

GAMER



Professor Layton and the Diabolical Box

Publisher:
Nintendo
Genre:
Adventure
ESRB:
Everyone 10+
August 24

Puzzle master Professor Layton and his apprentice, Luke, have stumbled upon another mystery. It's up to them to navigate their way through more than

150 new brain teasers, riddles and logic puzzles to determine who – or what – caused the death of Professor Layton's mentor, Dr. Schrader. Was it the mysterious Elysian Box, rumored to kill all who open it? Professor Layton and Luke find a clue that begins their adventure: a train ticket for the Molentary Express.

GAMER



Assassin's Creed: Altair's Chronicles

Publisher:
Ubisoft
Genre:
Action
ESRB:
Teen
Available Now

The detailed graphics and easy-to-use controls leave you hoping that this will be the standard for iPhone and iPod games in the future. The character jumps, hangs off ledges, crouches, uses combo attacks, and six weapons ranging from swords and crossbows to bombs. There's a short free demo; the full version boasts 28 levels and six to 10 hours of game play. It's a "must get!" You won't be disappointed!

GAMER



House balks on some Obama weapons cuts

By ANDREW TAYLOR
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Democratic-controlled House went along with Defense Secretary Robert Gates' plans to kill the over-budget F-22 fighter jet, but has rejected his efforts to cut off several other big ticket items.

Despite objections and veto threats from the White House, a \$636 billion Pentagon spending bill passed by a 400-30 vote Thursday contains money for a much-criticized new presidential helicopter fleet, cargo jets that Gates says aren't needed,

and an alternative engine for the next-generation F-35 Joint Strike Fighter that the Pentagon says is a waste of money.

It also contains \$128 billion for Pentagon operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, which would bring the total appropriated by Congress for those wars and other efforts to combat terrorism above \$1 trillion.

The bill rejects Obama's \$100 million request for the Pentagon to close the Guantanamo Bay detention center in Cuba.

It's the last of the 12 annual spending bills to come to the House floor as Democrats meet

their goal of passing all 12 bills before the August recess.

Even though the House is packed with Obama loyalists, the draw of defense industry jobs for weapons systems is strong even among the most liberal members. Typically, contractors and subcontractors are spread across the country to maximize support.

The items Gates seeks to kill mean jobs in such states as Georgia, Texas, California, Connecticut, New York, Indiana, and Ohio.

The measure also contains money for nine unrequested F-18 Super Hornet fighter jets, assembled in St. Louis.

Rep. John Murtha, D-Pa., the chief author of the defense spending measure, had originally sought \$369 million for a start on 12 additional F-22s. But after a veto threat from Obama — and a decisive vote against the airplane in the Senate last week — Murtha beat a tactical retreat and instead directed \$139 million toward spare engines for the F-22 and the C-17 cargo plane.

Murtha and Rep. Maurice Hinchey, D-N.Y., however, are not backing away from their support for the troubled VH-71 presidential helicopter, which is six years behind schedule and \$6 billion

over budget.

The underlying defense measure also:

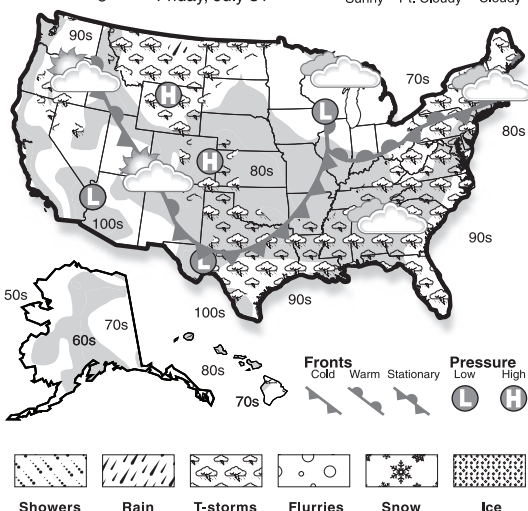
- Provides a 3.4 percent military pay hike, 0.5 percent above Obama's request, and provides a 14 percent increase for medical care for service members. It significantly increases funding to treat traumatic brain injury and mental health programs.

- Rejects Obama's \$100 million request for the Pentagon to close the Guantanamo Bay detention center in Cuba and extends a current ban on releasing Guantanamo detainees in the United States.

WEATHER OUTLOOK

National forecast

Forecast highs for Friday, July 31



Rain And Storms Persist In The East

A low pressure system will lift across the Great Lakes, dragging a cold front into the East. As the front advances, active weather will develop from southern New England to Southern Plains. Storms are also expected in the Northern Plains.

Weather Underground • AP

Thursday's global temperatures

City Hi Lo Weather	La Paz 55 23 clr
Amsterdam 76 58 rn	Lima 64 59 rn
Athens 87 77 clr	Lisbon 80 62 clr
Auckland 57 50 rn	London 69 57 rn
Baghdad 104 87 pc	Madrid 96 60 clr
Basra 116 85 clr	Managua 89 75 rn
Bahrain 109 92 clr	Manila 88 78 rn
Bangkok 89 79 pc	Mecca 113 84 clr
Barbados 85 76 rn	Melbourne 60 46 rn
Barcelona 81 70 clr	Mexico City 78 53 pc
Beijing 87 73 pc	Montevideo 54 27 pc
Beirut 91 77 clr	Montreal 86 67 rn
Belgrade 87 61 clr	Moscow 77 59 rn
Berlin 78 53 clr	Nairobi 78 51 clr
Bermuda 85 79 clr	Nassau 91 82 pc
Bogota 64 51 pc	New Delhi 93 82 pc
Brasilia 86 50 clr	Nice 82 70 clr
Brisbane 68 46 clr	Osaka 93 78 pc
Brussels 78 56 rn	Oslo 64 50 rn
Bucharest 87 57 clr	Panama 91 78 rn
Budapest 87 60 clr	Paris 82 59 pc
Buenos Aires 58 37 clr	Perth 68 42 clr
Cairo 97 79 clr	Prague 77 51 clr
Calgary 70 53 rn	Rio de Janeiro 77 66 pc
Caracas 90 80 clr	Rome 95 66 clr
Colombo 86 77 clr	San Jose 87 69 rn
Copenhagen 71 55 pc	San Juan 90 81 rn
Dhahran 116 86 clr	San Salvador 89 71 rn
Dhaka 87 77 rn	Santiago 70 30 clr
Dili 90 66 clr	Sao Paulo 65 57 rn
Dubai 102 86 clr	Sapporo 75 66 cdy
Dublin 66 51 rn	Seoul 86 69 pc
Frankfurt 82 52 pc	Singapore 90 77 pc
Geneva 89 54 pc	Sofia 87 57 pc
Guatemala 80 62 pc	Stockholm 71 53 pc
Hanoi 86 79 rn	Sydney 66 45 clr
Harare x x clr	Taipei 91 82 pc
Havana 95 73 clr	Tegucigalpa 96 66 rn
Helsinki 73 60 rn	Tehran 102 78 clr
Hong Kong 91 82 rn	Tel Aviv 92 78 clr
Islamabad 91 75 rn	Tokyo 86 77 rn
Istanbul 84 72 pc	Turin 86 67 pc
Jakarta 89 70 clr	Toronto 71 64 rn
Jerusalem 92 78 clr	Tunis 98 75 clr
Johannesburg 61 43 clr	Valletta 89 72 clr
Kabul 91 73 clr	Vancouver 93 68 clr
Kiev 80 59 clr	Vienna 81 60 pc
Kuala Lumpur 91 75 rn	Warsaw 76 61 pc
Kuwait 110 87 clr	Zurich 83 52 clr

SATURDAY'S FORECAST



Thursday's U.S. temperatures

City Hi Lo Precip Weather	Casper 60 40 .28 cdy	Erie 74 64 .33 cdy	Jacksonville 92 73 1.28 rn	Montgomery 90 74 1.06 rn	Richmond 88 71 .07 cdy	Spokane 87 65 clr
Abilene, Tex. 90 67 .42 rn	Charleston, S.C. 89 74 .95 cdy	Eugene 105 60 clr	Juneau 82 53 clr	Nashville 86 71 .03 rn	Roanoke 79 67 1.17 rn	Springfield, Ill. 80 60 cdy
Akron, Ohio 73 63 .44 cdy	Charleston, W.Va. 76 65 .78 rn	Evansville 85 71 .01 rn	Kansas City 79 60 cdy	New Orleans 92 78 clr	Rochester 77 59 .34 cdy	Springfield, Mo. 83 70 cdy
Albany, N.Y. 82 69 1.66 cdy	Charlotte, N.C. 85 72 .29 rn	Fairbanks 81 65 cdy	Key West 93 86 cdy	New York City 83 70 1.52 cdy	Rockford 78 57 cdy	Syracuse 83 65 .11 cdy
Albuquerque 90 61 .01 cdy	Chattanooga 88 74 .27 rn	Fargo 71 53 .01 cdy	Knoxville 81 71 .25 rn	Newark 85 73 2.97 cdy	Sacramento 85 58 clr	Tallahassee 87 73 .37 rn
Allentown, Pa. 83 69 .34 cdy	Cheyenne 58 45 .11 cdy	Flagstaff 83 52 cdy	Lake Charles 90 80 cdy	Norfolk, Va. 94 75 .46 cdy	St. Louis 82 69 .01 cdy	Tampa 91 79 rn
Amarillo 86 60 .08 cdy	Chicago 81 59 cdy	Flint 77 52 cdy	Lansing 78 55 cdy	North Platte 72 46 .15 clr	St. Petersburg 92 80 cdy	Toledo 80 56 cdy
Anchorage 67 53 .14 cdy	Cincinnati 79 66 .35 rn	Fort Smith 84 70 .47 rn	Las Vegas 107 87 clr	Oklahoma City 87 69 1.21 rn	St. Thomas 91 78 .04 cdy	Topeka 78 62 cdy
Asheville 82 63 rn	Cleveland 76 64 cdy	Fort Wayne 79 54 cdy	Lexington 80 68 .48 rn	Omaha 81 59 cdy	Salem, Ore. 106 63 cdy	Tucson 102 82 .01 clr
Atlanta 85 72 .05 rn	Colorado Springs 71 48 .49 cdy	Fresno 100 70 clr	Lincoln 78 58 .02 cdy	Orlando 94 74 .18 rn	Salt Lake City 89 63 clr	Tulsa 85 74 .05 cdy
Atlantic City 88 74 .34 cdy	Columbia, S.C. 89 73 cdy	Goodland 74 53 .34 cdy	Little Rock 84 71 1.80 rn	Paducah 82 72 .41 rn	San Angelo 96 69 .40 cdy	Tupelo 87 72 .01 rn
Austin 97 81 cdy	Columbus, Ga. 86 73 .40 cdy	Grand Junction 94 59 cdy	Los Angeles 84 67 cdy	Pendleton 98 64 clr	San Antonio 98 81 cdy	Waco 96 70 1.02 rn
Baltimore 86 68 .31 cdy	Columbus, Ohio 80 66 .65 rn	Grand Rapids 79 54 cdy	Louisville 82 71 .19 rn	Peoria 78 63 cdy	San Diego 73 66 cdy	Washington, D.C. 87 72 .05 cdy
Baton Rouge 92 77 .06 cdy	Concord, N.H. 87 69 .37 cdy	Great Falls 66 48 .05 clr	Lubbock 93 64 .45 cdy	Philadelphia 92 73 .47 cdy	San Francisco 71 58 cdy	W. Palm Beach 92 78 cdy
Billings 72 50 clr	Corpus Christi 96 80 clr	Green Bay 78 56 rn	Madison 77 58 rn	Phoenix 110 87 clr	San Jose 77 61 cdy	Wichita 81 68 .08 cdy
Birmingham 86 73 .03 rn	Dallas-Ft. Worth 90 69 .99 cdy	Greensboro, N.C. 85 68 .10 cdy	Medford 109 72 clr	Pittsburgh 74 66 1.20 cdy	San Juan, P.R. 90 81 cdy	Wilkes-Barre 79 67 .85 cdy
Bismarck 71 54 .27 cdy	Dayton 79 62 .10 rn	Harrisburg 80 69 .03 cdy	Memphis 88 73 .26 rn	Pocatello 81 50 clr	Santa Fe 88 53 .06 cdy	Wilmington, Del. 87 70 .10 cdy
Boise 93 67 clr	Daytona Beach 92 74 .77 rn	Hartford Spgfld 82 70 .18 cdy	Miami Beach 90 79 .77 cdy	Portland, Ore. 106 71 clr	St. Ste Marie 66 52 rn	Yakima 94 61 cdy
Boston 83 73 cdy	Denver 71 51 .23 cdy	Helena 74 49 clr	Midland-Odessa 93 68 .16 cdy	Providence 81 73 .01 rn	Savannah 91 73 .60 rn	Youngstown 72 61 .49 cdy
Bridgeport 81 73 .15 cdy	Des Moines 81 65 .01 cdy	Honolulu 89 78 clr	Milwaukee 79 61 cdy	Pueblo 78 57 1.45 cdy	Seattle 103 70 rn	
Brownsville 95 80 clr	Detroit 80 59 cdy	Houston 97 83 cdy	Mpls-St Paul 78 58 .01 cdy	Raleigh-Durham 92 74 .28 cdy	Shreveport 92 74 .57 rn	
Buffalo 77 61 .10 cdy	Duluth 70 56 .04 rn	Huntsville 88 74 .04 rn	Missoula 81 50 cdy	Rapid City 68 47 cdy	Sioux City 80 58 .05 cdy	
Burlington, Vt. 88 68 .26 cdy	El Paso 102 81 cdy	Indianapolis 81 66 cdy	Mobile 89 78 cdy	Reno 94 67 cdy	Sioux Falls 74 53 .53 cdy	
Caribou, Maine 85 66 .81 rn	Elkins 75 63 .38 cdy	Jackson, Miss. 91 73 .41 cdy			South Bend 76 56 cdy	

National temperature extremes
High: Weds., 125, Death Valley, Calif.
Low: Thurs., 30, Yellowstone Lake, Wyo.



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AFRTS Television Schedule

Updated sports listings are available on AFN's Web site at <http://myafn.dodmedia.osd.mil/>

FRIDAY, JULY 31, 2009

	(AFN-ATLANTIC)	(AFN-FAMILY)	(AFN-MOVIE)	(AFN-NEWS)	(AFN-PACIFIC)	(PENTAGON)	(SPECTRUM)	(AFN-SPORTS)	(XTRA)
15:00	Sesame Street	The Brady Bunch	(2:45) Movie "Cocoon"	The Rachel Maddow Show	Days of our Lives	Fit For Duty	How Do I Look?	SportsCenter	(2:00) Sports
15:30		The Brady Bunch	(1985, Fantasy) Don Ameche, Willford Brimley, Brian Dennehy.	Around the Services	Oprah Winfrey	Battleground			
16:00	The View	Movie "The Canterville Ghost" (1986, Mystery)		Tavis Smiley		Army Newswatch	Lost Worlds Hitler's vision of postwar Germany.	MLB Baseball Los Angeles Dodgers at St. Louis Cardinals. From Busch Stadium in St. Louis. (Same-day Tape Subject to Blackout)	MTV Hits Playlist
16:30		John Gielgud, Alyssa Milano.				EXchange on Air			
17:00	Dr. Phil	Behind the Scenes	Movie "The Family Stone"	Nightly Business Report	Wheel of Fortune	Around the Services	King of the Hill		X Play
17:30		SpongeBob SquarePants	(2005) Dermot Mulroney. A man introduces his uptight girlfriend to his family.	Nightline	Jeopardy!	Downrange	That '70s Show		Punk'd
18:00	Judge Alex	Robot Boy	What It Takes	The O'Reilly Factor	World News-Gibson	Today's Air Force	Daily Show-Jon Stewart		The Simpsons
18:30	The King of Queens	Kim Possible	Entertainment Tonight		Around the Services	All Hands TV	The Colbert Report		Family Guy
19:00	Access Hollywood	Unfabulous	Movie "The Family Stone"	Countdown With Keith Olbermann	Law & Order: Special Victims Unit "Persona"	Briefing Encore	scrubs "My New Role"	SportsCenter	World Series of Poker
19:30	Judge Judy	True Jackson, VP	(2005) Dermot Mulroney. A man introduces his uptight girlfriend to his family.	Today	CSI: Miami	Fit For Duty	My Name Is Earl		
20:00	The Young and the Restless	Sonny With a Chance				Battleground	Chuck "Chuck Versus the Santa Claus"	Quick Pitch	
20:30		Wizards of Waverly Place				Recon Revisited			
21:00	General Hospital	Wildfire Horses are lost in a stampede.	Movie "Seabiscuit" (2003, Drama) Tobey Maguire, Jeff Bridges, Chris Cooper. Three men lead a race-horse to glory in the 1930s.	Today	Big Brother 11	Around the Services	Brothers & Sisters Kitty promotes her tell-all book.	MLB Baseball Seattle Mariners at Texas Rangers. From Rangers Ballpark in Arlington, Texas. (Same-day Tape Subject to Blackout)	South Park "Damien"
21:30						Pacific Report	Seinfeld "The Couch"		South Park
22:00	Days of our Lives	Heroes ".07 Percent"		America's Newsroom		Briefing Encore	Friends		The Best Damn Sports Show Period
22:30						All Hands TV	Daily Show-Jon Stewart		Attack of the Show!
23:00	Oprah Winfrey	7th Heaven "My Kinda Guy"		Newsroom	The Tonight Show With Conan O'Brien	Today's Air Force			
23:30			(:40) Movie/Malcolm X		Late Show-Letterman	Downrange	The Colbert Report		

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 2009

00:00	Wheel of Fortune	Unfabulous	(11:40) Movie "Malcolm X" (1992, Biography)	MSNBC Live	Late Show-Letterman	Recon	Late Night With Jimmy Fallon	SportsCenter	X Play
00:30	Jeopardy!	True Jackson, VP	Denzel Washington, Angela Bassett, Albert Hall. Spike Lee's portrait of the late civil rights advocate.	Happening Now	The Late Late Show With Craig Ferguson	Fit For Duty	Scrubs "My Fishbowl"	SportsCenter	Punk'd
1:00	Headline News	Sonny With a Chance			Judge Judy	The Grill Sergeants	My Name Is Earl		The Simpsons
1:30	ATS/AFN Report	Wizards of Waverly Place		Newsroom	CSI: NY "Til Death Do We Part"	Around the Services	Desperate Housewives "Getting Married Today"		Family Guy
2:00	Law & Order: Special Victims Unit "Persona"	Wildfire "Lost & Found" Horses are lost in a stampede.			Oprah Winfrey	Downrange	Third Watch "A Rock and a Hard Place"	Golf U.S. Senior Open Championship -- Second Round. From Crooked Stick Golf Club in Carmel, Ind.	World Series of Poker
2:30		Heroes ".07 Percent"	Movie "The Family Stone" (2005) Dermot Mulroney, Diane Keaton. A man introduces his uptight girlfriend to his family.	MSNBC Live		EXchange on Air	Seinfeld "The Couch"		
3:00	CSI: Miami					State Dept Briefing	Friends		South Park "Damien"
3:30							Kiana's Flex Appeal		South Park
4:00	Big Brother 11	7th Heaven "My Kinda Guy"	Movie "Seabiscuit" (2003, Drama) Tobey Maguire, Jeff Bridges, Chris Cooper. Three men lead a race-horse to glory in the 1930s.	Studio B With Shepard Smith	Good Morning America	Around the Services	Denise Austin's Getting Fit		The Best Damn Sports Show Period
4:30						National Guard News	Easy Entertaining		Attack of the Show!
5:00	Headline News	Barney & Friends		The Situation Room With Wolf Blitzer	Good Morning America	Downrange	Ace of Cakes	Around the Horn	
5:30	The Tonight Show With Conan O'Brien	Oobi		Glenn Beck		Around the Services	Ultimate Goals	Pardon the Interruption	
6:00		Sesame Street				Briefing Encore		SportsCenter	MTV Hits Playlist
6:30	Late Show With David Letterman	My Friend Rabbit		Around the Services	Dragon	Downrange	Clean House		
7:00						Recon	MythBusters Alarm solutions.		
7:30	The Late Late Show With Craig Ferguson	Clifford's Puppy Days	(:40) Movie "Love Me Tender" (1956, Western) Elvis Presley. Brothers clash over a woman's love and a stolen payroll.	NBC Nightly News	Ribert & Robert's	Fit For Duty	Storm Chasers "Tornado Showdown"	MLB Baseball Boston Red Sox at Baltimore Orioles. From Oriole Park at Camden Yards in Baltimore. (Subject to Blackout) (Live)	Sports
8:00						Around the Services	Dirty Jobs "Aerial Tram Greaser" Aerial tram maintenance.		
8:30	Judge Judy	Mickey Mouse Clubhouse		World News-Gibson	Sonic the Hedgehog	Recon Revisited	Latin Lifestyles		
9:00	CSI: NY "Til Death Do We Part"	Sid the Science Kid		CBS Evening News	Danny Phantom	State Dept Briefing	Urban Style		
9:30		Phineas and Ferb		The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer		Fit For Duty	Designed to Sell	Baseball Tonight	
10:00	Oprah Winfrey	The Buzz on Maggie	(:21) Movie "Nick of Time" (1995, Suspense) Johnny Depp, Christopher Walken.	Hannity		AFN Europe Report	Tyler's Ultimate	NFL Live	
10:30		American Dragon: Jake Long		Anderson Cooper 360		This Week in the Pentagon	The Next Food Network Star "VIP Party in Miami"	SportsCenter	Sports
11:00	Dr. Phil	My Life as a Teenage Robot	(:02) Movie "M*A*S*H" (1970, Comedy) Donald Sutherland. Two unorthodox Army doctors declare war on bureaucracy.	Special Report With Bret Baier	Entertainment Studios.com	Fit For Duty	Eureka "Blink"		
11:30		Static Shock				Battleground	Stargate Atlantis "Allies" Wraith call for alliance.	SportsCenter	
12:00	CBS Evening News	Teen Kids News		Campbell Brown	Criss Angel Mindfreak	Around the Services	King of the Hill		
12:30	ESPN	Grossology			Dogfights Pilots Paul Speer and Phil Wood.	FNG Useful benefits.	That '70s Show		
13:00	NBC Nightly News	Out There	(:10) Movie "Crimson Tide" (1995, Suspense) Denzel Washington, Gene Hackman. U.S. submarine officers clash over orders to launch nukes.	Your World With Neil Cavuto	Access Hollywood	Army Newswatch	My Boys "Spring Training"	Baseball Tonight	
13:30	World News-Gibson	Planet's Funniest Animals				The Grill Sergeants	The Big Bang Theory	NFL Live	
14:00	Dragon	Faithful Friends		The Rachel Maddow Show	Deadliest Catch "Pribilof Stare"	Fit For Duty	The Unit "Into Hell, Part One"	SportsCenter	
14:30	Ribert & Robert's	Crocodile Hunter's Croc Files		Around the Services	Law & Order "Bling"	Battleground	Prison Break Sarah finds out about Michael's condition.		
15:00	Sonic the Hedgehog	Animal Miracles "Indiana Jones"	(:16) Movie "Army of Darkness" (1992, Fantasy) Bruce Campbell, Embeth Davidtz.	Tavis Smiley		Ft. Hood on Track	Saturday Night Live	Sports	MTV Hits Playlist
15:30	Danny Phantom	SpongeBob SquarePants		Nightly Business Report	Extreme Makeover: Home Edition "Turner Family"	This Week in the Pentagon			
16:00	Naruto	SpongeBob SquarePants		Nightline	World News-Gibson	Recon Revisited			Top 20 Countdown
16:30	Darcy's Wild Life	Bindi the Jungle Girl		The O'Reilly Factor	ESPN	Army Newswatch	Everybody Loves Raymond		Top 20 Countdown
17:00	Entertainment Studios.com	Lemur Kingdom		Countdown With Keith Olbermann	Law & Order A writer's killer leads to an espionage case.	The Grill Sergeants	My Boys "Spring Training"		ECW
17:30	Criss Angel Mindfreak	The Universe "Unexplained Mysteries"		Today	Leverage The team tricks an alcoholic financier into rehab.	Fit For Duty	The Unit "Into Hell, Part One"		WWE SmackDown!
18:00	Dogfights Pilots Paul Speer and Phil Wood.	So You Think You Can Dance Top six.			America's Most Wanted: America Fights Back	Battleground			
18:30		To Be Announced			Headline News	Balad and Beyond			
19:00	Access Hollywood	(:45) Dawson's Creek "Detention"			American Dad				
19:30		(:45) Movie "X2: X-Men United" (2003, Fantasy) Patrick Stewart, Hugh Jackman, Ian McKellen. A right-wing militarist pursues the mutants.	(:16) The Flight That Fought Back		'Til Death A gift causes a rift.				
20:00	Deadliest Catch "Pribilof Stare"		(:03) Movie "The Truman Show" (1998) Jim Carrey.	MSNBC Live	Back to You				
20:30	Law & Order "Bling"			Bulls and Bears					
21:00				Cavuto on Business					
21:30									
22:00	Law & Order A writer's killer leads to an espionage case.								
22:30	Leverage The team tricks an alcoholic financier into rehab.								
23:00									
23:30									

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2, 2009

00:00	America's Most Wanted: America Fights Back	The Simpsons	(11:03) Movie "The Truman Show" (1998) Jim Carrey.	Forbes on FOX	Law & Order: Special Victims Unit "Pretend"	FNG Useful benefits.	(11:30) Austin City Limits	(10:00) Sports	Top 20 Countdown
00:30		The Simpsons		Cashin' In	Bones "Mother and Child in the Bay"	Fit For Duty	Keeping Up-Kardashians		
1:00	Sports	So You Think You Can Dance Top six.	(12:58) Movie "Get Shorty" (1995, Comedy) John Travolta. A sly hoodlum conspires to break into the movie business.	Newsroom	House "Hunting"	Around the Services	Wife Swap "Tassie/Tyson"		Top 20 Countdown
1:30		To Be Announced		Your Money		Around the Services	Boston Legal "Desperately Seeking Shirley"		Sports
2:00		(:45) Movie "X2: X-Men United" (2003, Fantasy) Patrick Stewart, Hugh Jackman, Ian McKellen. A right-wing militarist pursues the mutants.		This Week in the Pentagon	Law & Order A writer's killer leads to an espionage case.	Around the Services	Judging Amy "8 1/2 Narrow"	Sports	
2:30				Wall Street Journal Report	Leverage The team tricks an alcoholic financier into rehab.	First Air Force Now	Austin City Limits "Ben Harper"		
3:00				America's News HQ	America's Most Wanted: America Fights Back	Battleground	Kiana's Flex Appeal		Sports
3:30						National Guard News	Denise Austin's Getting Fit		
4:00									
4:30									
5:00	Sports	Barney & Friends		Newsroom					
5:30		Oobi	The Flight That Fought Back						

News

Sports

Weather

MIDDLE EAST HEADLINES

Alleged serial rapist barred from work at U.S. bases in

SCOREBOARD

Pacific scoreboard for the April 8 edition

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Military News

Sports

Weather

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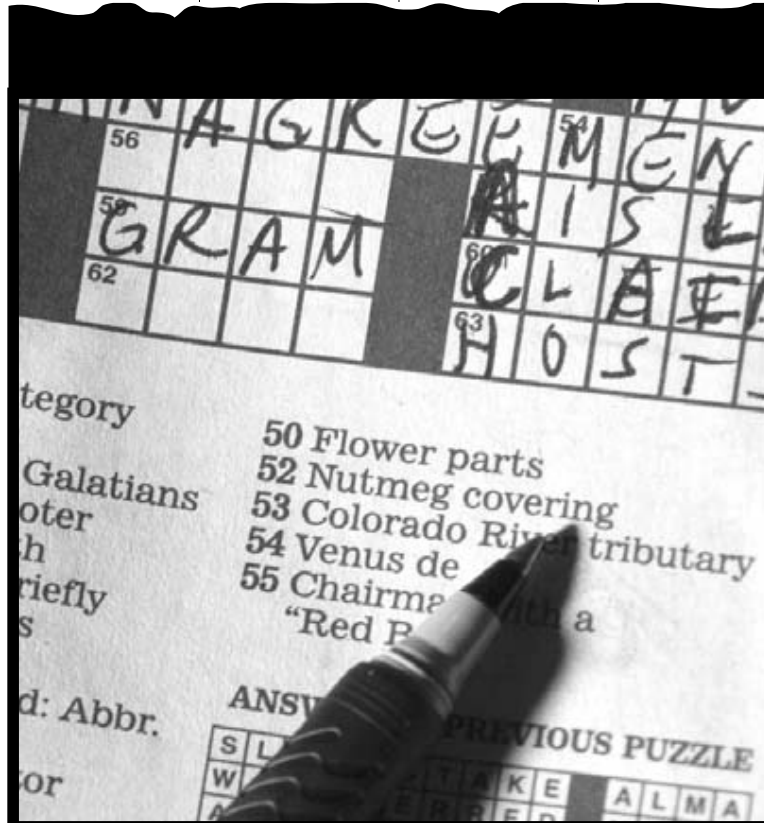
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STARS AND STRIPES

NFL briefs

Vick says he's close to signing with team

The Associated Press

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. — Michael Vick said Thursday that he is getting close to signing with a professional football team but refused to elaborate.

Vick made the comment as he left a courtroom after a hearing in his bankruptcy case. Asked about his progress in signing with a team, Vick said: "We're getting close." He declined to answer additional questions.

NFL commissioner Roger Goodell conditionally reinstated Vick on Monday, a week after the former Atlanta Falcons star completed his 23-month sentence for running a dogfighting ring. Vick is free to sign with a team and could be playing in the NFL by the sixth week of the season.

He also could play in one of a couple of minor leagues if no NFL team signs him. His agent, Joel Segal, did not immediately return a telephone message.

Vick, 29, did not speak during the hearing. Afterward, the U.S. bankruptcy trustee and a lawyer for Vick's creditors shook Vick's hand and congratulated him on his NFL reinstatement. Vick thanked them and said, "It's exactly what I needed at this point in my life."

U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Frank Santoro postponed until Friday a decision on whether to approve \$1.5 million in legal fees sought by Crowell & Moring, the Madison Avenue law firm representing Vick in the Chapter 11 case. Santoro was astonished that the firm is billing Vick for 8,000 hours of work over about 10 months.

"I don't understand how that happens," Santoro said.

Santoro said he wants an explanation of the hours Friday, when he will conduct a hearing on Vick's bankruptcy plan.

Crowell & Moring had sought more than \$2.6 million, but agreed to slash the amount to \$1.5 million after the U.S. trustee and attorneys for one of Vick's major creditors, Joel Enterprises Inc., complained in court papers that the fees were excessive.

Vick filed for bankruptcy protection in July 2008 while he was serving his sentence in the federal penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kan.

The former Virginia Tech star



A Washington Redskins fan holds a sign in support of quarterback Michael Vick during training camp at Redskins Park on Thursday. The reinstated Vick said he is close to signing a contract with a team, but wouldn't disclose which one.

EVAN VUCCI/AP

spent the last two months of his sentence on home confinement in Hampton.

Bears coach denies Cutler-Ulricher rift

BOURBONNAIS, Ill. — Chicago Bears coach Lovie Smith shot down reports of a rift between new quarterback Jay Cutler and star linebacker Brian Urlacher, saying they're simply not true.

"That's no story," Smith said Thursday when his team reported to camp. "You've got questions about what's going on?"

Former Bears receiver Bobby Wade caused a stir when he told Minneapolis radio station KFAN-AM that Urlacher used a profanity while questioning Cutler's manhood during a conversation on a trip to Las Vegas last weekend. Wade, who now plays for the Vikings, said Urlacher used a stronger version of the word "wimp" during the interview that had to be edited. Chicago radio station WSCR-AM also reported that Urlacher had to be restrained from confronting Cutler during organized team activities.

Boldin shows at camp after helping teammates

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — Disgruntled wide receiver Anquan Boldin has reported for training camp with the Arizona Cardinals, a little late because he turned around to help a couple of teammates who had car trouble.

Boldin declined to talk to re-

porters after checking in at the Northern Arizona University dorms with the reigning NFC champions on Wednesday.

Upset because he has yet to get a new contract, Boldin sat out minicamp with what he said was a sore hamstring, then did not participate in the voluntary summer workouts.

Arizona first-round draft pick Beanie Wells was a no-show. The running back from Ohio State is the only Cardinals pick from this year's draft yet to reach a contract agreement. Wells also missed the voluntary workouts because of an NFL rule that prohibited his participation because his college session had not ended.

According to Whisenhunt, Boldin was on his way up Interstate 17 from Phoenix when he turned around to retrieve wide receiver Early Doucet and linebacker Ali Highsmith, teammates stranded by car trouble.

Giants' Pierce testifies in Burress case

NEW YORK — New York Giants linebacker Antonio Pierce testified before the grand jury investigating a gun charge against Plaxico Burress.

Pierce arrived Thursday at a lower Manhattan courthouse, a day after the grand jury heard testimony from Burress, a former Giants wide receiver.

Burress, who pleaded not guilty to illegal possession of a weapon, shot himself in the thigh at a Man-

hattan nightclub in November.

Burress was with Pierce, who could be charged. Giants President John Mara defended Pierce's actions, which included taking Burress to a hospital under an assumed name.

Owens unveils cereal with his name on box

FAIRPORT, N.Y. — For Buffalo Bills fans who can't get enough of Terrell Owens, now they can have him for breakfast.

With about 400 fans chanting "T.O.! T.O.!" in a crowded corner of a suburban Rochester supermarket, Owens unveiled the breakfast cereal that bears his name, T.O.'s Honey Toasted Oats.

Noting he's never had a food named for him, Owens said having "this beautiful handsome face" on the cover is better than making it on a box of Wheaties.

The cereal is produced by Pittsburgh-based PLB Sports, which previously produced Flutie Flakes when Doug Flutie was a Bills quarterback.

49ers put CB Harris on injured reserve

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — San Francisco cornerback Walt Harris was placed on injured reserve Wednesday, two months after surgery on his right knee put the former Pro Bowl player's career in jeopardy.

Harris tore a ligament in his knee in a collision with receiver Dominique Zeigler during minicamp workouts May 19.

Harris, 34, underwent surgery later in the month. San Francisco signed veteran cornerback Dre' Bly just one day after Harris' injury, indicating Harris had no shot of playing this year.

Harris, a 13-year pro, has never missed more than four games in an NFL season. He had been a mainstay on the 49ers' defense since 2006, when he made the Pro Bowl with eight interceptions.

Vikes' Childress says he's content with QBs

MANKATO, Minn. — Minnesota Vikings coach Brad Childress insisted Wednesday that the chase for Brett Favre is over.

Childress said he's "more than content" with a competition between Tarvaris Jackson and Sage

Rosenfels for the job the team tried so hard to give to Favre, only to find out the NFL's career passing leader decided to remain retired.

"He's gone his way, and we've gone our way," Childress said after meeting with Jackson and Rosenfels earlier in the day. Childress described their demeanor as excited, proudly noting Jackson was the first player to report to the residence hall on the Minnesota State University campus.

Rosenfels was grateful for some resolution, but said he wasn't insulted by his teammates' overt interest in acquiring the famously waffling quarterback.

Childress was pressed to definitively rule out another dalliance with Favre. "There's not a chance, from my standpoint. I'm going forward with the guys we have, and we'll have a great competition," he said, using a similar line to deny interest in recently reinstated Michael Vick.

Also:

■ Vikings defensive end Kenechi Udeze retired, ending a remarkable comeback from leukemia. Minnesota's first-round draft pick in 2004, Udeze was a starter for four years and tied for the team lead with five sacks in 2007. He was diagnosed in February 2008 with the disease, a cancer of the blood and bone marrow.

Elsewhere ...

■ The Baltimore Ravens reached a five-year deal with rookie offensive tackle Michael Oher. The deal ends a two-day holdout by Oher, the No. 23 pick in this year's NFL Draft. The contract is expected to exceed the five-year, \$12.55 million deal for last year's pick at Oher's slot — Pittsburgh Steelers running back Rashard Mendenhall.

■ Defensive tackle Hollis Thomas signed with the St. Louis Rams after being released by the New Orleans Saints in April. The free agent, 35, is a 13-year.

■ Pittsburgh Steelers tight end Heath Miller agreed to a six-year contract that runs through the 2014 season. Miller, one of the top blockers among NFL tight ends, had one season remaining on the five-year contract he signed after being Pittsburgh's first-round draft pick in 2005.

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A WEEKLY LOOK **RACING STRIPES** AT MOTORSPORTS

'It's time to be a champion'

JGR's Hamlin wants more than another spot in Chase

By WILL GRAVES
The Associated Press

Scan the top of the NASCAR standings, and Denny Hamlin is there, same as always.

The Joe Gibbs Racing star has his No. 11 Toyota a relatively comfortable sixth in the standings, in good position to make the Chase for the championship with six races to go.

So, everything's great heading into Sunday's race at Pocono, right?

Not exactly.

"On paper it looks good that we're sixth," Hamlin said. "I'm not comfortable with where we're at."

How could he be?

Hamlin, 28, began the season saying "it's time to be a champion, not a guy that contends."

Yet with the season more than halfway gone, Hamlin is still searching for his first trip to Victory Lane and is in the middle of the longest winless drought of his career: 50 races and counting.

While most drivers would hardly quibble with his season or a résumé that includes a berth in the Chase the past three years, Hamlin has grown tired of watching his dreams of a championship fade in the fall.

This year was supposed to be different, but the ban on offseason testing combined with the remarkable strength of Hendrick Motorsports and Stewart-Haas Racing has left Hamlin and teammate Kyle Busch among the drivers scrambling to catch up with the likes of superstars Tony Stewart, Jimmie Johnson and Jeff Gordon.

"Week in, week out it's a Hendrick car winning one way, shape or form," Hamlin said. "Pretty much they're taking all the top five spots, to be honest with you. We feel like we've got a tall mountain to climb."

The ascent didn't get off to a good start at Indianapolis.

Busch stumbled to 38th after his right front tire blew, and a broken drive shaft early in the race sent Hamlin to the garage



SKIP STEWART/AP

Joe Gibbs Racing's Denny Hamlin has earned a berth in Sprint Cup's Chase for the championship each of the past three seasons.

for 16 laps. He finished 34th, the third time in eight races he's been in the bottom 10.

Afterward JGR president J.D. Gibbs admitted "we might not have the best stuff right now."

Hamlin estimated JGR is the team best equipped to close the gap, but feels Hendrick and Stewart-Haas have a distinct advantage because of their technical alliance.

"Ultimately, they're getting better feedback," Hamlin said. "... We hear on the radio when (Stewart) struggles or (Ryan Newman) struggles, they just say over the radio, 'Hey, go get the notes from (Mark Martin's car) and find out what he's running.' That's big."

Don't get Hamlin wrong, he's not whining. He believes there's enough time left in the season for JGR to make inroads, but the margin for error is small.

While Busch has three wins this season, his inability to consistently salvage something out of "bad" races has left him 14th in the standings, 82 points out of the Chase heading into this week's visit to Pocono.

Busch pledged to be a more positive influence after a meltdown at Chicago earlier this month, and Hamlin said he's seen a change in the way Busch handles himself on the track.

"He has stepped it down," Hamlin said. "He's not going all out like he did I think, before. He's trying to finish as good as he can."

Having a teammate in the Chase would certainly help, and Hamlin has pledged to do what he can to make sure Busch rallies over the next six weeks.

He doesn't, however, feel any additional pressure as JGR's elder statesman. He knows now that it will take more than one driver at JGR to fill the void left by the departure of Stewart, who won two titles at Gibbs before leaving at the end of last year to become a driver and co-owner at Stewart-Haas.

"It takes me and Kyle and Joey (Logano) to step up and kind of fill the gap that Tony left here as far as doing the hard work of going and doing some testing at these race-tracks, figuring out what we need to get

better," Hamlin said. "It's really on all of our shoulders, not just mine because I've been here the longest."

Maybe, but neither Busch nor Logano have been as close to a title as Hamlin was in 2006 when he finished third behind Johnson and Matt Kenseth. He's made the Chase the past two seasons, too, but has hardly been a factor, finishing eighth in 2007 and sixth last year.

The success has been nice, but it's not been enough for a driver who grew used to winning once every four or five races during his pre-Cup career. He's worked hard to develop a better relationship with crew chief Mike Ford, and owner Joe Gibbs praised Hamlin's maturity during the offseason.

The fact he's managed to be competitive despite Hendrick's dominance is a testament to Hamlin's patience. Yet the frustration of knowing he's likely not driving the fastest car is starting to get old.

"Believe me, I don't want to go to the racetrack every single week and say, 'Man, I know we can run top five, but are we going to have the best car? I doubt it. Probably a Hendrick car will have the best car. Probably one of those guys are going to hit it and we're going to be chasing them,'" Hamlin said. "I don't like that attitude and feeling that way when we go to the race-track. I want to feel like we can win every single week we step in the car."

A return to Pocono should help. Hamlin won there twice during his rookie season, a time when he thought he had this whole Cup thing figured out. Things haven't been quite the same since the series moved to the new car, though he still has five top-10s in seven career starts at the unique 2.5-mile circuit.

"We always run well there," he said. "It just tends to my style a little bit and when we go there Mike has a good feel. ... We're always going to be competitive there."

If Hamlin wants to prove he's ready to make a legitimate run at a title, he knows he'll need to be more than that.

FAST FACTS

SPRINT CUP

Race 21: Pennsylvania 500
at Pocono Raceway, Long Pond, Pa.
3 a.m. Monday, Japan & Korea, AFN-Sports

Last race: Jimmie Johnson cashed in on the most expensive speeding ticket in NASCAR history, grabbing an improbable third victory in four years at Indianapolis Motor Speedway when a penalty to Juan Pablo Montoya blew the race wide open.

Last year: Carl Edwards raced to the fourth of his series-high nine 2008 victories, beating Tony Stewart.

Worth noting: Mark Martin, the Sprint Cup Series victory leader with four, is winless in 44 starts at Pocono.

Next race: Heluva Good! Sour Cream Dips At The Glen, Aug. 9, Watkins Glen International, Watkins Glen, N.Y.



Driver to watch: Brian Vickers, currently 15th in the standings, has finished seventh, seventh and fifth in the past three races. Could his first victory of the season be next?

DRIVER STANDINGS

Through 20 of 36 races

1. Tony Stewart	3,054
2. Jimmie Johnson	2,862
3. Jeff Gordon	2,847
4. Kurt Busch	2,608
5. Carl Edwards	2,556
6. Denny Hamlin	2,518
7. Ryan Newman	2,506
8. Kasey Kahne	2,482
9. Mark Martin	2,471
10. Juan Pablo Montoya	2,461
11. Greg Biffle	2,445
12. Matt Kenseth	2,429
13. David Reutimann	2,361
14. Kyle Busch	2,347
15. Brian Vickers	2,309
16. Clint Bowyer	2,278
17. Jeff Burton	2,201
18. Marcos Ambrose	2,175
19. Joey Logano	2,083
20. Jamie McMurray	2,060
21. Casey Mears	1,998
22. Dale Earnhardt Jr.	1,983
23. Kevin Harvick	1,939
24. Martin Truex Jr.	1,932
25. Elliott Sadler	1,924

NATIONWIDE SERIES

This week: U.S. Cellular 250 at Newton, Iowa (Delayed, 11 p.m. Sunday, AFN-Xtra).

Next race: Zippo 200, Aug. 8, Watkins Glen International, Watkins Glen, N.Y.

Driver Standings

1. Kyle Busch	3,296
2. Carl Edwards	3,104
3. Brad Keselowski	2,904
4. Jason Leffler	2,790

CAMPING WORLD TRUCKS

This week: Toyota Tundra 200 at Gladeville, Tenn.

Next race: O'Reilly 200, Aug. 19, Bristol Motor Speedway, Bristol, Tenn.

Driver Standings

1. Ron Hornaday Jr.	2,098
2. Mike Skinner	1,924
3. Matt Crafton	1,922
4. Todd Bodine	1,803

FORMULA ONE

Last race: McLaren's Lewis Hamilton won the Hungarian Grand Prix, the defending series champion's first victory of the year.

Next race: Grand Prix of Europe, Aug. 23, Streets of Valencia, Valencia, Spain.

Driver Standings

1. Jenson Button	70
2. Mark Webber	51.5
3. Sebastian Vettel	47
4. Rubens Barrichello	44

INDYCAR SERIES

This week: Meijer Indy 300 at Sparta, Ky. (Delayed, 11 p.m. Monday, AFN-Xtra).

Next race: Honda Indy 200, Aug. 9, Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, Lexington, Ohio.

Driver Standings

1. Scott Dixon	380
2. Dario Franchitti	377
3. Ryan Briscoe	366

NHRA

Last event: Antron Brown beat Cory McElenathan in the Top Fuel final at Infielden Raceway. Tim Wilkerson (Funny Car) and Jason Line (Pro Stock) also won.

Next event: Lucas Oil NHRA Nationals, Aug. 13-16, Brainerd International Raceway, Brainerd, Minn.

Driver Standings

1. Antron Brown	1,283
2. Tony Schumacher	1,084
3. Larry Dixon	1,035

Funny Car

1. Tony Pedregon	1,101
2. Ron Capps	1,090
3. Ashley Force Hood	1,054

Pro Stock

1. Jeg Coughlin	1,273
2. Mike Edwards	1,213
3. Jason Line	1,203

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Sports on AFN

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AFN-Sports, 2 a.m.-Golf: 30th U.S. Senior Open, first round, at Carmel, Ind.
AFN-Sports, 9 a.m.-MLB: N.Y. Yankees at Chicago White Sox.
AFN-Xtra, 10 a.m.-Extreme games: X Games XV, moto X best whip, skateboard big air final, moto X step up final, at Los Angeles.
AFN-Sports, noon-MLB: Philadelphia at San Francisco (joined in progress).
AFN-Sports, 4 p.m.-MLB: L.A. Dodgers at St. Louis (dld).
AFN-Sports, 9 p.m.-MLB: Seattle at Texas (dld).

Saturday
AFN-Sports, 2 a.m.-Golf: 30th U.S. Senior Open, second round, at Carmel, Ind.
AFN-Sports, 8 a.m.-MLB: Boston at Baltimore.
AFN-Xtra, 9 a.m.-Extreme games: X Games XV, BMX freestyle street, big air rail jam final, BMX freestyle big air final, super X adaptive final, moto X best trick final, at Los Angeles.
AFN-Pacific, 11 a.m.-MLB: Toronto at Oakland.
AFN-Xtra, noon-MLB: Toronto at Oakland (joined in progress).
AFN-Sports, 4 p.m.-MLB: Colorado at Cincinnati (dld).
AFN-Sports, 8 p.m.-MLB: L.A. Angels at Minnesota (dld).

Sunday
AFN-Sports, 4 a.m.-Golf: 30th U.S. Senior Open, third round, at Carmel, Ind.
AFN-Xtra, 4 a.m.-Extreme games: X Games XV, moto X freestyle elimination, BMX freestyle park final, skateboard street men's final, moto X super moto men's final, at Los Angeles.
AFN-Atlantic, 5 a.m.-MLB: N.Y. Yankees at Chicago White Sox.
AFN-Atlantic, 8 a.m.-MLB: Chicago Cubs at Florida.
AFN-Sports, 8 a.m.-MLB: Houston at St. Louis.
AFN-Xtra, 8:30 a.m.-Extreme games: X Games XV, BMX freestyle vert final, moto X super X men's and women's finals, skateboard vert final, moto X freestyle final, at Los Angeles.
AFN-Xtra, noon-Soccer: FC Barcelona at Los Angeles.
AFN-Sports, 4 p.m.-MLB: L.A. Dodgers at Atlanta (dld).
AFN-Xtra, 4 p.m.-MLB: Detroit at Cleveland (dld).
AFN-Xtra, 8 p.m.-MLB: L.A. Angels at Minnesota (dld).
AFN-Sports, 9 p.m.-Golf: PGA Buick Open, third round, at Grand Blanc, Mich. (dld).
AFN-Xtra, 11 p.m.-Auto racing: NASCAR Nationwide U.S. Cellular 250 at Newton, Iowa (dld).

All times are Japan and Korea Standard; (dld) indicates delayed broadcast. All listings are subject to change. Visit www.myafn.net for more information.

AP spotlight

August 1
1936 — The Olympic Games open in Berlin. The opening ceremonies are presided over by Adolf Hitler.
1945 — New York's Mel Ott hits his 500th home run in a 9-2 victory over the Boston Braves at the Polo Grounds. Only Babe Ruth with 714 and Jimmie Foxx with 527 have more.
1972 — Nate Colbert of the San Diego Padres drives in 13 runs in a double-header sweep of the Atlanta Braves 9-0 and 11-7.
1987 — Mike Tyson wins the undisputed heavyweight championship with a 12-round unanimous decision over IBF champion Tony Tucker in Las Vegas.
1990 — Arkansas jumps to the South-eastern Conference, severing its 76-year tie to the troubled Southwest Conference.
1992 — Eric Griffin, a two-time world champion at 106 pounds, loses to Rafael Lozano of Spain under the new electronic scoring system used at the Summer Olympics, even though all five judges credit him with more blows than his opponent as did five jury members used as a backup in case the computer failed.
1994 — Baltimore's Cal Ripken becomes the second major leaguer to play 2,000 straight games as the Orioles beat Minnesota 1-0.
1996 — Michael Johnson wins Olympic gold in the 200 meters in a record 19.32 seconds, becoming the first male Olympian to win the 200 and 400 in a single games. Dan O'Brien wins gold in the decathlon, four years after failing to make the U.S. Olympic team.
2004 — Karen Stupples wins her first major title with a record-tying 19-under 269 at the Women's British Open. Stupples ties the low score in a major, set by Dottie Pepper at the 1999 Nabisco Dinah Shore.

Tennis

Croatia Open
Wednesday
At ITC Stella Maris Umag, Croatia
Purse: \$639,000 (WT250)
Surface: Clay-Outdoor
Singles
Second Round
Nicolas Almagro (6), Spain, def. Marcel Granollers, Spain, 6-1, 6-3.
Alberto Martin, Spain, def. Martin Kli-zan, Slovakia, 6-4, 6-4.
Nikolay Davydenko (1), Russia, def. Daniel Gimeno-Traver, Spain, 6-2, 6-2.
Oscar Hernandez, Spain, def. Sergiy Stakhovsky, Ukraine, 7-6 (3), 6-1.
Ivan Ljubicic, Croatia, def. Filippo Volandri, Italy, 6-1, 6-4.
Maximo Gonzalez, Argentina, def. Viktor Troicki (3), Serbia, 6-4, 3-6, 7-6 (6).
David Ferrer (2), Spain, def. Daniel Koelliker, Austria, 6-1, 6-7 (2), 6-3.
Nicolas Massu, Chile, def. Blaz Kavcic, Slovenia, 5-7, 6-3, 6-2.
L.A. Open
Wednesday
At Los Angeles Tennis Stadium at UCLA
Los Angeles
Purse: \$700,000 (WT250)
Surface: Hard-Outdoor
Singles
Second Round
Carsten Ball, Australia, def. Dmitry Tursunov (3), Russia, 6-4, 0-1, retired.
John Isner, United States, def. Marcos Baghdatis, Cyprus, 6-3, 7-6 (11).
Marat Safin (8), Russia, def. Ernests Gulbis, Latvia, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.
Tommy Haas (1), Germany, def. Jesse Levine, United States, 6-1, 6-3.

Bank of the West Classic
Wednesday
At The Taube Family Tennis Center Stanford, Calif.
Purse: \$700,000 (Premier)
Surface: Hard-Outdoor
Singles
Second Round
Samantha Stosur, Australia, def. Monica Niculescu, Romania, 6-1, 7-5.
Maria Sharapova, Russia, def. Nadia Petrova (5), Russia, 6-1, 6-2.
Elena Dementieva (3), Russia, def. Maria Kirilenko, Russia, 6-1, 6-2.
Daniela Hantuchova, Slovakia, def. Agnieszka Radwanska (7), Poland 4-6, 7-6 (6), 6-1.

Swiss Open
Thursday
At Roy Emerson Arena Gstaad, Switzerland
Purse: \$639,000 (WT250)
Surface: Clay-Outdoor
Singles
Second Round
Marcos Daniel, Brazil, def. Julien Benneteau, France, 6-3, 7-6 (8).
Florent Serra, France, def. Victor Hanescu (4), Romania, 6-4, retired.
Nicolas Kiefer (6), Germany, def. Ivan Navarro, Spain, 6-3, 6-7 (3), 6-2.
Thomas Bellucci, Brazil, def. Stanislas Wawrinka (1), Switzerland, 6-4, 6-4.
Wednesday
Victor Crivoi, Romania, def. Teimuray Gabashvili, Russia, 6-4, 6-4.
Andrea Beck, Germany, def. Guillermo Garcia-Lopez, Spain, 7-6 (3), 1-6, 7-6 (3).
Igor Andreev (3), Russia, def. Jan Hernych, Czech Republic, 6-4, 6-1.
Jeremy Chardy (5), France, def. Mikhail Youzhny, Russia, 6-3, 5-7, 6-3.

Istanbul Cup
Thursday
At Sadi Gulkelik Spor Sitesi Istanbul
Purse: \$220,000 (Intl.)
Surface: Clay-Outdoor
Singles
Second Round
Lucie Hradecka (6), Czech Republic, def. Julia Georges, Germany, 2-6, 6-4, 6-1.
Andrea Petkovic, Germany, def. Ros-sana De Los Rios, Paraguay, 6-1, 6-0.
Anabel Medina Garrigues (3), Spain, def. Pemra Ozgen, Turkey, 2-6, 6-2, 6-0.
Wednesday
Olga Govortsova (7), Belarus, def. Angelique Kerber, Germany, 6-4, 6-7 (7), 6-4.
Vera Dushkevina (5), Russia, def. Maria Elena Camerin, Italy, 6-0, 6-1.
Timea Bacsinszky, Switz., def. Mariya Korytseva, Russia, 6-2, 3-6, 4-1, retired.
Marta Domachowska, Poland, def. Aravane Rezaï (4), France, 6-3, 4-6, 6-4.

TANK McNAMARA



Soccer

CONCACAF Champions League
PRELIMINARY ROUND
First Leg
Tuesday, July 28
D.C. United (United States) 1, Firpo (El Salvador) 1
Pachuca (Mexico) 3, Jalapa (Guatemala) 0
Wednesday, July 29
Puerto Rico Islanders 1, Toronto FC (Canada) 0
San Francisco (Panama) 2, San Juan Jabloteh (Trinidad and Tobago) 0
Liberia (Costa Rica) 3, Real Espana (Honduras) 0
Thursday, July 30
W Connection (Trinidad and Tobago) vs. New York Red Bulls (United States)
Herediao (Costa Rica) vs. Cruz Azul (Mexico), 10 p.m.
Olimpia (Honduras) vs. Arabe Unido (Panama)
Second leg
Tuesday, Aug. 4
Puerto Rico Islanders vs. Toronto (Canada)
Jalapa (Guatemala) vs. Pachuca (Mexico)
Firpo (El Salvador) vs. D.C. United (United States)
Wednesday, Aug. 5
New York Red Bulls (United States) vs. W Connection (Trinidad and Tobago)
Cruz Azul (Mexico) vs. Herdiano (Costa Rica).
Thursday, Aug. 6
Arabe Unido (Panama) vs. Olimpia (Honduras)
San Juan Jabloteh (Trinidad and Tobago) vs. San Francisco (Panama)
Real Espana (Honduras) vs. Liberia (Costa Rica)

MLS						
Eastern Conference						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Columbus	7	3	9	30	28	24
Chicago	7	3	8	29	25	20
D.C.	6	3	10	28	31	28
Toronto FC	7	7	5	26	27	30
New England	6	5	5	23	18	21
Kansas City	5	6	5	21	20	19
New York	2	15	4	10	16	37
Western Conference						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Houston	9	5	5	32	23	14
Seattle	7	3	8	29	26	16
Los Angeles	6	3	10	28	23	20
Colorado	7	5	6	27	28	23
Chivas USA	8	6	3	27	19	15
Real Salt Lake	6	7	5	23	28	23
FC Dallas	4	9	7	17	22	30
San Jose	3	10	5	14	21	35
NOTE: Three points for victory, one point for tie.						
Wednesday, July 29						
Everton 1-3 MLS All-Stars 1, tie, Everton wins 4-3 on penalty kicks						

Pro basketball

WNBA				
EASTERN CONFERENCE				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Indiana	13	4	.765	—
Connecticut	9	7	.563	3½
Washington	9	8	.529	4
Chicago	9	10	.474	5
Atlanta	8	10	.444	5½
New York	6	10	.375	6½
Detroit	5	9	.357	6½
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Phoenix	14	5	.737	—
Seattle	17	7	.611	2½
Minnesota	10	8	.556	3½
San Antonio	8	8	.500	4½
Los Angeles	5	10	.333	7
Sacramento	4	15	.211	10

Tuesday's games
Indiana 85, Washington 81
Phoenix 95, Connecticut 80
Los Angeles 76, Minnesota 70
San Antonio 74, Seattle 71
Wednesday's game
Chicago 75, Los Angeles 63
Thursday's games
San Antonio at Sacramento
Connecticut at Indiana
Phoenix at New York
Washington at New York
Friday's game
Minnesota at Detroit

Saturday, Aug. 1
Toronto FC at New England
Real Salt Lake at Chicago
D.C. United at Houston
Kansas City at FC Dallas
Columbus at Colorado
Sunday, Aug. 2
Seattle FC at San Jose

Wednesday
Everton 2, MLS 1 (SO)
Everton won 4-3 in shootout
First half—1, Everton, Saha 1, 12th minute. 2, MLS, Davis 4 (Holden, Casey), 26th.
Goalies—Everton, Tim Howard; MLS, Kasey Keller.
Yellow Cards—Rodwell, Everton, 78th. A—20, 120 (20,008)
Lineups
Everton—Tim Howard, Tony Hibbert, Jack Rodwell, Joleon Lescott, Tim Cahill (James Vaughan, 76th), Leighton Baines, Marouane Fellaini (Jo, 56th), Joseph Yobo, Louis Saha (James Wallace, 76th), Philip Neville, Leon Osman (Jose Baxter, 76th).
MLS—Kasey Keller, Wilman Conde (Jhon Kennedy Hurtado, 63rd), Stuart Holden (Javier Morales, 63rd), Conor Casey, Fredy Montero (Landon Donovan, 45th), Cuauhtemoc Blanco (Davy Arnaud, 63rd), Geoff Cameron, Chad Marshall (Bakary Soumare, 45th), Brad Davis, Kyle Beckerman (Will Johnson, 45th), Freddie Ljungberg.

WPS						
	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Los Angeles	11	2	5	38	24	6
Saint Louis	8	6	3	27	15	14
Washington	7	6	5	26	27	28
Boston	7	7	4	25	17	17
Sky Blue FC	6	7	5	23	16	17
Chicago	4	9	5	17	15	22
FC Gold Pride	3	9	5	14	13	23
NOTE: Three points for victory, one point for tie.						

Wednesday's games
Washington 1, Boston 0
Saturday's games
Washington at FC Gold Pride
Boston at Saint Louis
Sunday's games
Los Angeles at Chicago
Wednesday, August 5
FC Gold Pride at Sky Blue FC
Chicago at Saint Louis
Saturday, August 8
Sky Blue FC at Washington
Sunday, August 9
Los Angeles at Boston
Saint Louis at FC Gold Pride

Boxing

July 31
At Johannesburg, South Africa, Mzonke Fana, South Africa, vs. Jasper Seroka, South Africa, 12, IBF junior lightweight eliminator.
At Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino, Hollywood, Fla., Julio Diaz, Coahuella, Calif., vs. Victor Manuel Cayo, Dominican Republic, 10, lightweightvs; Derric Rossy, Meford, N.Y., vs. Carl Davis Drumond, Costa Rica, 10, heavyweightvs.
At Temecula, Calif., Marvin Quintero, Mexico, vs. Tyrone Harris, Lansing, Mich., 10, junior lightweightvs.
Aug. 1
At Agua Caliente Casino, Rancho Mirage, Calif., Timothy Bradley, Palm Springs, Calif., vs. Nate Campbell, Jacksonville, Fla., 12, for Bradley's WBO super lightweight title; Devon Alexander, St. Louis, vs. Junior Witter, England, 12, for the vacant WBC super lightweight title.
At Mohegan Sun Resort, Uncasville, Conn., Delvin Rodriguez, Danbury, Conn., vs. Issac Hlatshwayo, South Africa, 12, for the vacant IBF welterweight title.
Aug. 7
At Buffalo Bill's Star Arena, Primm, Nev., Alfredo Angulo, Coahuella, Calif., vs. Gabriel Rosado, Philadelphia, 10, junior middleweights.

Deals

Wednesday's transactions
BASEBALL
MLB—Suspended Detroit Tigers RHP Carlos Alvarado and RHP Frank Penalver 50 games each after testing positive for performance-enhancing drugs.
American League
BALTIMORE ORIOLAS—Placed LHP Rich Hill on the 15-day DL. Purchased the contract of RHP Chris Tillman from Norfolk (IL).
CHICAGO WHITE SOX—Optioned INF Josh Fields to Charlotte (IL). Placed RHP Bartolo Colon on the 15-day DL, retroactive to July 25. Purchased the contract of LHP Randy Williams from Charlotte.
NEW YORK YANKEES—Acquired RHP Jason Hirsh from Colorado for a player to be named. Released RHP Brett Tomko.
TEXAS RANGERS—Recalled INF Joaquin Arias from Oklahoma City (PCL). Optioned RHP Doug Mathis to Oklahoma City.
National League
CHICAGO CUBS—Recalled RHP Mitch Atkins from Iowa (PCL). Optioned RHP Jeff Stevens to Iowa.
CINCINNATI REDS—Acquired OF Wladimir Balentien from Seattle for RHP Robert Manuel.
HOUSTON ASTROS—Purchased the contract of RHP Bud Norris from Rou Rock (PCL). Activated RHP Doug Brocail from the 15-day DL.
PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES—Acquired LHP Cliff Lee and OF Ben Francisco from Cleveland for RHP Carlos Carrasno, INF Jason Donald, C Lou Marson and RHP Jason Knapp.
PITTSBURGH PIRATES—Traded SS Jack Wilson and RHP Ian Snell to Seattle for SS Ronny Cedeno, C Jeff Clement, RHP Nathan Adcock, RHP Brett Lorin and RHP Aaron Pribanic. Acquired RHP Tim Lincecum from San Francisco for 2B Freddy Sanchez.
SAN DIEGO PADRES—Agreed to terms with RHP James Neely.
BASKETBALL
National Basketball Association
CLEVELAND CAVALIERS—Waived G Tarence Kinsey.
FOOTBALL
National Football League
BALTIMORE RAVENS—Agreed to terms with OT Michael Oher on a five-year contract.
BUFFALO BILLS—Signed WR Shaine Smith, G Eric Wood and S Jairus Byrd. Placed Byrd on the active/non-football-injury list.
CINCINNATI BENGALS—Signed LB Rey Mauluga.
MINNESOTA VIKINGS—Signed OT Phil Loadholt.
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS—Signed LS Jake Ingram. Waived DB Lamar Love.
PITTSBURGH STEELERS—Agreed to terms with TE Heath Miller on a six-year contract.
ST. LOUIS RAMS—Signed DT Hollis Thomas. Waived DL Kirston Pittman, DL Willie Williams, WR Travis Brown and WR Horace Gant.
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS—Placed CB Walt Harris on injured reserve and DL Ricky Jean-Francois on the non-football illness list.
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS—Placed DE Brandon Miller from the waived/non-football injury list. Signed DE Derek Walker.
TENNESSEE TITANS—Agreed to terms with DT Sen'Derrick Marks. Waived OL Ryan Schmidt and DT Derrick Jones.
HOCKEY
National Hockey League
EDMONTON OILERS—Agreed to terms with F Liam Reddox and F Ryan Potulny.
MINNESOTA WILD—Re-signed G Josh Harding to a one-year contract.
OTTAWA SENATORS—Signed D Derek Smith and F Jeremy Yablonski to one-year contracts.
PHOENIX COYOTES—Re-signed LW Scottie Upshall and G Josh Tordjman to one-year contracts.
ST. LOUIS BLUES—Signed D Bryce Lampman.
TAMPA BAY LIGHTNING—Named Rick Wilson associate coach and agreed to terms with him on a multiyear contract.
LACROSSE
Major League Lacrosse
MLS—Suspended Washington M Kyle Dixon one game for an illegal slash to the head during Saturday's game against Chicago. Fined Long Island D Nicky Polanco an undisclosed amount for an illegal body check and Long Island M Peter Vlahakis an undisclosed amount for an illegal slash, both during Saturday's game against Denver.
COLGEE
OHIO VALLEY CONFERENCE—Named Elizabeth "Beth" DeBauche commissioner.
ARKANSAS-LITTLE ROCK—Named Chris McNaughton women's assistant soccer coach.
CHARLOTTE—Named Kris Rochelle assistant baseball coach.
FELICIAN—Named Rick Krasny softball coach.
FORDHAM—Named Patrice Arrington women's assistant volleyball coach.
KENT STATE—Signed associate head baseball coach Mike Birbeck to a four-year contract extension.
MONTANA—Named Robin Plflugrad wide receivers coach.
ROCHESTER—Named Margaret Yerdon softball coach.
ROCKY MOUNTAIN—Announced the resignation of David Reeves, football coach. Named offensive coordinator Brian Armstrong interim head coach.
WESTERN KENTUCKY—Dismissed F David Laury from the men's basketball team.

Sports briefs

Police rule boxer Gatti committed suicide

The Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO — A Brazilian police investigation determined that the death of boxer Arturo Gatti was a suicide and a court ordered the release of his wife, once suspected of killing him, officials said Thursday.

Lead investigator Paulo Alberes told The Associated Press authorities found that Gatti killed himself July 11 in a seaside resort in northeastern Brazil.

When asked if police had determined the case was a suicide, Alberes said yes. He offered no other details.

A day after Gatti, 37, was found dead, police said his Brazilian wife, Amanda Rodrigues, 23, had strangled him with her purse strap as he drunkenly slept.

But police began to back off the accusation about a week later after a coroner's report said Gatti might have killed himself as he was found "suspended and hanged." The autopsy report didn't exclude the possibility he was slain, but said he also could have died in an unexplained accident, besides killing himself.

Judge Ildete Verissimo de Lima ordered the immediate release of Rodrigues after receiving the police report.

Gatti, who captured two world titles in his 16-year pro career, retired in 2007 with a 40-9 record.

Everton tops MLS All-Stars on penalty kicks

SANDY, Utah — Landon Donovan is looking forward to playing with Tim Howard behind him again.

Facing Howard was a frustrating reminder of how good the U.S. national goaltender is.

Howard made six saves in regulation and stopped three shots on penalty kicks to lead Everton past the Major League Soccer team in the MLS All-Star Game 4-3 in penalty kicks on Wednesday night. Howard kept the MLS club out of the goal time after time and forced the 1-1 game into two extra rounds of penalty kicks to decide it, before Seattle Sounders star Freddie Ljungberg was taken to hospital for a migraine headache.

"I wasn't surprised. I've seen it a lot of times in training and in games," said Donovan, who had a chip shot punched over the crossbar by Howard in the second half.

Fortunately for Donovan, he and Howard should be teammates again Sept. 5 in a World Cup qualifier when the U.S. team plays El Salvador at Rio Tinto Stadium, where Howard shined Wednesday night.

"He's one of the best goalkeepers in the world and he showed that again," Donovan said. "Hopefully he won't get many chances against him again, but if he plays like that we're going to get through qualifying relatively easily and we can do big things in the World Cup."

Howard was voted the most valuable player after stopping Ljungberg on the final penalty kick.



American Ryan Lochte won the 200 individual medley and set a world record in the world swimming championships in Rome on Thursday.

ANDREW MEDICHINI/AP

Seattle's Swedish midfielder, who played the entire game, was carted off the field after the final kick due to the migraine. He was taken to a hospital for evaluation, according to MLS.

Everton is the only international club to beat the MLS All-Stars, who had been 5-0 in this format including four wins over Premier League teams.

Louis Saha scored the only regulation goal for Everton in the 12th minute. Brad Davis of the Houston Dynamo scored for the MLS stars, who held a 21-11 shots advantage.

Stanford, Kim share lead in Women's British Open

LYTHAM ST. ANNES, England — Angela Stanford birdied the last hole with a 30-foot putt for a 2-under 70 Thursday and shared the first-round lead in the Women's British Open with Song-Hee Kim.

Kim, one of 29 Koreans playing in the championship, holed from 20 feet for birdie at the last.

Stanford and Kim were a shot ahead of Yuko Mitsuoka of Japan and Hee Young Park on a day when stiff winds on the back nine at Royal Lytham and St. Annes made scoring difficult.

Michelle Wie coped well to shoot a 1-over 73, while Paula Creamer carded a 74 without a birdie on her card.

Top-ranked Lorena Ochoa shot a 75, LPGA Tour money-leader Cristie Kerr had a 76 and defending champion Jiyai Shin returned a 77.

Stanford coped well with the conditions with an eagle and two birdies to offset two late bogeys, playing the back nine in even par.

Congress passes resolution to pardon boxer Johnson

WASHINGTON — Congress approved a resolution Wednesday urging a presidential pardon for Jack Johnson, the late black heavyweight champion who was imprisoned because of his romantic ties with a white woman.

Congress passed the resolution by voice vote, about a month after the Senate approved it.

Johnson became the first black heavyweight champion in 1908. The Senate resolution was sponsored by Sen. John McCain.

The resolution's congressional sponsor, Peter King, said he was thrilled that after five years of efforts, it's passed both chambers of Congress.

In 1913, Johnson was con-

victed of violating the Mann Act, which made it illegal to transport women across state lines for immoral purposes. The law has since been heavily amended, but has not been repealed.

Johnson fled the country after his conviction, but agreed years later to return and serve a 10-month jail sentence. He tried to renew his boxing career after leaving prison, but failed to regain his title. He died in a car crash in 1946 at age 68.

Johnson won the 1908 world heavyweight title after police in Australia stopped his 14-round match against the severely battered Canadian world champion, Tommy Burns.

Stepmom sues Mayfield over his comments

STATESVILLE, N.C. — Jeremy Mayfield's stepmother sued the suspended NASCAR driver Wednesday, claiming he made slanderous, false and defamatory statements.

In civil court papers filed in Iredell County civil court, Lisa Mayfield argues her stepson falsely accused her of killing his father and taking money from NASCAR. She's seeking compensatory and punitive damages of more than \$10,000 each and "further relief as the Court may deem just and proper."

Jeremy Mayfield's comments in several interviews came after his stepmother signed an affidavit claiming she witnessed him taking methamphetamine at least 30 times over seven years. Her affidavit was part of a NASCAR filing asking the federal judge who lifted the driver's drug suspension to reinstate the ban.

The 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has since ruled in NASCAR's favor to keep Mayfield off the track.

The driver has denied ever using the illegal drug.

Lisa Mayfield attorney Edmund Gaines wrote in the three-page filing that Jeremy Mayfield made the comments with "intent to injure and damage the Plaintiff" and "with reckless disregard for the truth."

In interviews, Jeremy Mayfield suggested NASCAR paid his stepmother to lie about his alleged past drug use and accused her of killing his father.

"NASCAR did a great job, that is pretty much a low blow, especially with a lady who is involved with killing my dad," according to the court filing, quoting an interview with Charlotte, N.C., TV station WSOC.

Police ruled Terry Mayfield's death in 2007 a suicide.

Rachel Alexandra made Haskell favorite

OCEANPORT, N.J. — Preakness-winning filly Rachel Alexandra was made the 4-5 favorite for the Haskell Invitational at New Jersey's Monmouth Park.

The 1 1/8-mile race Sunday also will feature Belmont Stakes winner Summer Bird in a field of seven 3-year-olds. Summer Bird is the 7-2 third choice behind 3-1 pick Munnings. Calvin Borel will be aboard Rachel Alexandra, who drew the No. 6 post. Summer Bird drew the No. 2 post.

Rachel Alexandra has rolled to a seven-race winning streak, including a victory over Kentucky Derby winner Mine That Bird in the Preakness on May 16. She was the first filly to win the Preakness in 85 years.

Swimmers continue shattering records in worlds

ROME — Down goes Beijing. Seven more world records on the fifth night of the world swimming championships pushed the total to 29, sending Rome right on past last summer's Olympics that were thought to be the limits of speed in the pool. That meet will be left in the dust — there are still three more days of competition at the Foro Italico.

China closed out the biggest assault on the record book yet with its win in the women's 800-free-style relay. The time of 7 minutes, 42.08 seconds easily surpassed

the previous record of 7:44.31, set by Australia at the Beijing Games. The Americans also broke the previous mark (7:42.56) but settled for silver.

How fast were they swimming in those high-tech suits that will soon be banned by FINA? More than half of Thursday night's 13 races, including semifinals and finals, produced world records. They were falling so fast, the crowd barely had time to cheer before another mark dropped.

Brazil's Cesar Cielo became the first swimmer to break 47 seconds in the 100-meter freestyle, setting another world record and holding off France's Alain Bernard.

Cielo won the furious down-and-back race in 46.91 seconds on Thursday. He eclipsed Eamon Sullivan's mark of 47.05 set during the semifinals of the Beijing Olympics.

With Michael Phelps cheering from the stands, Ryan Lochte of the United States set a world record in the 200-meter individual medley.

Lochte won in 1 minute, 54.10 seconds, breaking Phelps' gold-medal time of 1:54.23 from the Beijing Olympics. Phelps skipped this event at the worlds, but he was in the stands with the rest of the American team.

Laszlo Cseh of the Hungary took the silver in 1:55.24, and American Eric Shanteau captured his first major international medal with a bronze in 1:55.36. Shanteau competed at last year's Olympics after being diagnosed with testicular cancer.

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MLB briefs

Report: Big Papi, Manny tested positive in 2003

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — David Ortiz and Manny Ramirez were among the more than 100 Major League Baseball players who tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs in 2003, according to a report in The New York Times.

The article posted on the newspaper's Web site Thursday cited lawyers involved in pending litigation over the testing results who spoke anonymously because the information is under seal by a court order.

Ortiz declined comment to the paper. In 2004, he and Ramirez helped lead the Boston Red Sox to their first World Series title since 1918.

The results from the 2003 tests were supposed to be anonymous, but they were seized by federal agents. The New York Yankees' Alex Rodriguez admitted using performance-enhancing drugs after he was linked to the 2003 list. Ramirez, now with the Los Angeles Dodgers, recently served a 50-game suspension for violating baseball's drug policy. Ortiz, known as Big Papi, had not been previously linked to positive tests.

Mets GM apologizes to New York reporter

NEW YORK — New York Mets

general manager Omar Minaya said he apologized to a reporter for his critical comments during a bizarre news conference.

Minaya said he met with New York Daily News reporter Adam Rubin on Wednesday.

But the GM was unclear when asked Thursday if he stood by his statements that questioned Rubin's motives and credibility for a series of articles about former player development executive Tony Bernazard.

Minaya had been sharply criticized since he said Rubin had "lobbied" him and Bernazard for a job in player development. Rubin denied he asked Minaya for a job and insisted he had merely sought career advice.

Orioles agree to trade Sherrill to Dodgers

BALTIMORE — The Los Angeles Dodgers and Baltimore Orioles agreed in principle to a trade that would send former All-Star reliever George Sherrill to Los Angeles for two minor leaguers.

The deal won't become final until the three players pass physicals, a person with knowledge of the deal told The Associated Press on Thursday. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the trade had not been completed.

Sherrill would give the Dodgers, who have the best record in

the NL, a major boost in the bullpen. He has 20 saves this season and would join All-Star closer Jonathan Broxton.

The rebuilding Orioles will receive third baseman Josh Bell and right-hander Steve Johnson, both of whom were playing at Double-A Chattanooga.

Cubs' Johnson to miss at least a month

CHICAGO — The Chicago Cubs' Reed Johnson, who's been platooning in center field with Kosuke Fukudome, could be out for at least a month after fracturing his left foot Wednesday.

Johnson fouled a ball of his foot during a six-run first inning, then stayed in the game through the third before the pain was too much to continue. He was put on the 15-day disabled list Thursday.

Giants get Sanchez from Pittsburgh

SAN FRANCISCO — The San Francisco Giants acquired three-time All-Star infielder Freddy Sanchez from the Pittsburgh Pirates on Wednesday. The Pirates got minor league pitcher Tim Alderson.

Sanchez was the 2006 NL batting champion and should boost the Giants' bid for the NL wildcard spot.

He is hitting .296 with six home runs and 34 RBIs.

Phillies: Philadelphia also bolsters its bench by adding Francisco

PHILLIES, FROM BACK PAGE

right-hander whom the Phillies thought could help balance their left-leaning rotation, he has been one of the most dominant pitchers in the American League over the past year and a half. The lefty bounced back from a rough 2007 season to go 22-3 with a 2.54 ERA in 2008 on his way to the AL Cy Young award. While he went just 7-9 in 22 starts for a bad Cleveland team this season, he ranked in the top 10 among AL starters in ERA (3.14, 7th), innings (152, 1st), and fewest home runs allowed (10, T-6th).

"I'm anxious and excited to get there," Lee said. "It's the National League. I'm going to have to figure out how to get a bunt down more consistently."

The Phillies also targeted Francisco, 27, an outfielder who has hit .261 with 28 home runs in 817 at-bats over the past three seasons, to fill a glaring void on their bench. Francisco, who played regularly for Cleveland the past two years, is hitting .250 with 10 home runs in 308 at-bats this season.

Amaro said the team viewed Cleveland as a potential trade partner throughout the process, but it wasn't until Tuesday that Lee emerged as a likely addition.

"It got fairly hot and heavy the last three or four days," Amaro said, "and certainly the last 24 hours or so, we finally got to the point where both sides were feeling more comfortable with the names that were involved."

Amaro declined to comment on negotiations with the Blue Jays, which reportedly broke down with Toronto insisting on acquiring lefthander J.A. Happ, top pitching prospect Kyle Drabek, and top outfield prospect Dominic Brown.

In acquiring Lee and Francisco, the Phillies managed to keep all three of those players, as well as corner outfielder Michael Taylor, who was recently promoted to Triple-A Lehigh Valley after dominating at Double-A Reading.

But the Phillies do not feel they fleeced Cleveland, particularly because the centerpiece of their offer was Knapp, 18, a right-hander once thought to be "untouchable" by the organization. Knapp, a second-round pick in the 2008 draft, has a fastball that ranges from the mid-to-upper 90s and potential that some have compared to current Florida Marlins sensation Josh Johnson.

Knapp was 2-7 with a 4.01 ERA at low-Class A Lakewood, but a case of shoulder fatigue hampered him in his last start, when he allowed six earned runs in two-thirds of an inning. He has been on the disabled list since July 11, but the Phillies labeled the move a "precautionary" measure. The organization also parted with three prospects who could help the Indians next season, including Carrasco, top infield prospect Jason Donald and top catching prospect Lou Marson.

Donald, who was impressive in big-league spring training but struggled with a knee injury with

Lehigh Valley during the regular season, was blocked by Jimmy Rollins and Chase Utley at shortstop and second base. Marson was hitting .294 at Lehigh Valley and was 6-for-21 in two brief big-league stints this season and in 2008, but the Phillies did not feel he was ready defensively to challenge Carlos Ruiz for a spot on the active roster.

Marson and Donald were assigned to Triple-A Columbus, meaning they will simply report to the visitors clubhouse in Allentown on Thursday night when the Clippers play the IronPigs.

Carrasco, meanwhile, had an inconsistent season at Lehigh Valley, going 6-9 with a 5.18 ERA. While the Phillies believe he has the stuff to be a top-of-the-rotation pitcher, they felt he still needed to work on his consistency and ability to pitch inside before he was ready to break into the rotation.

"We gave them four very, very good baseball prospects, and that hurts," Amaro said. "But when you are talking about players of Cliff Lee's ilk, and Ben Francisco, when you want to acquire talent, you have to give talent."

Still, the Phillies think they accomplished their goal of bolstering their chances of winning over the next two seasons while also not sacrificing too much of the future. Donald, Carrasco and Marson did not appear to be factors for the roster next season. Drabek, who many feel could be ready to join the rotation next season, is still in the system. So is Brown, whose body type and athleticism are reminiscent of Darryl Strawberry, one personnel man said Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the Phillies control their top four starters through next season — Lee has a \$9 million club option for 2010, after which he will become a free agent; Joe Blanton is arbitration eligible and will be a free agent after 2010 — and Cole Hamels and J.A. Happ through at least 2011.

Halladay would have cost the Phillies \$15.75 million next season, meaning they save close to \$7 million by trading for Lee.

But money was not the deciding factor. Instead, it was the opportunity to add a Cy Young-caliber starter and a solid righthanded bat for an appetizing package of prospects.

Amaro said Wednesday the team was likely done dealing, meaning you can erase any thoughts of a last-ditch run at Halladay.

Lee, who will wear No. 34, was expected to join the team in San Francisco on Thursday, along with Francisco, who will wear No. 10.

Francisco could play Thursday night. But it remains to be seen whether Lee will start Friday night, when he will be on full rest, or Saturday.

"I think it sends a message," Manuel said. "Not only to our players but to everybody else that we want to get better. It shows that we're expecting to play and win."

Return: Indians reducing expenses

RETURN, FROM BACK PAGE

are dependent on victories. The victories are not there this year. So neither is the revenue.

The team has been on an austerity drive all season, trying to reduce expenses where it can.

But Lee's trade was not a salary dump. Of that I am assured. The Indians' owners did not instruct general manager Mark Shapiro to reduce salary and get rid of contracts.

But next year's payroll might drop by 25 percent, and Travis Hafner is due \$11.5 million, Jake Westbrook \$11 million and Kerry Wood \$10.5 million.

The math is not complex.

Shapiro had said all along he had to feel compelled to make a trade, and he apparently liked the group of players he acquired.

But the feel of it is just not right. And the public perception is not good. Especially when you factor in that the Indians received none of the guys whom the Toronto Blue Jays were demanding for Roy Halladay. It comes across that the Indians accepted the Phillies' "next" group.

That will matter only if all four players fail to make it as major leaguers.

If they all can play, it won't

matter if they were the first, 13th or 783rd group.

Hanging on to Lee seemed to be sensible because the message that trading him sends to fans is that next year is a washout.

The Indians might not believe that's the message, and they might not accept that's the message, but that's sure the one the fans heard.

Maybe the Indians looked at next year's roster and saw that Lee, Victor Martinez and Westbrook are all in the last year of their contracts.

They did not expect to be able to sign all three, and they also had to figure that next year's reduced payroll would hamper their ability to improve the team if they had those three salaries on the team.

They could have ridden out 2010 and seen what happened, but decided to make moves now rather than wait.

They head to 2010 with a rotation that might include Fausto Carmona and Westbrook and also might include Aaron Laffey and Jeremy Sowers and David Huff and ... who knows.

Who are the guys they acquired?

Carlos Carrasco is in Triple-A at the age of 22, which is a good sign. He's somewhat of a right-

handed Cliff Lee.

Jason Knapp might be the best prospect acquired, but he's 18, which means he's three or four years away.

Lou Marson is a catcher, which is an interesting acquisition given the Indians have Martinez and Carlos Santana. Perhaps this is a prelude to Martinez moving permanently to first base, which would put Matt LaPorta in left field.

Jason Donald provides middle infield depth.

A lot of good trades are made by teams that send one player to a contending team, because the contending team is desperate and gives up a lot.

The Indians have made some of those, acquiring Sandy Alomar Jr. and Carlos Baerga for Joe Carter, and getting Lee, Grady Sizemore and Brandon Phillips for Bartolo Colon.

Nobody knows what the results of this trade will be, but everyone can say that the Indians lost a starting rotation anchor — check his numbers closely this year and they're almost as good as last season — and got not one major-league player in return.

That just doesn't feel good.

The Indians' best hope it feels better in a couple years.

MLB scoreboard

American League				
East Division	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	62	39	.614	—
Boston	59	42	.584	3
Tampa Bay	55	47	.539	7½
Toronto	49	53	.480	13½
Baltimore	44	57	.436	18
Central Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Detroit	53	47	.530	—
Minnesota	52	50	.510	2
Chicago	51	51	.500	3
Cleveland	42	60	.412	12
Kansas City	40	61	.396	13½
West Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	60	40	.600	—
Texas	56	43	.566	3½
Seattle	53	48	.525	7½
Oakland	43	58	.426	17½

Tuesday's games
 Kansas City 4, Baltimore 3, 11 innings
 Tampa Bay 6, N.Y. Yankees 2
 Oakland 9, Boston 8, 11 innings
 Texas 7, Detroit 3
 Minnesota 5, Chicago White Sox 3
 L.A. Angels 7, Cleveland 6
 Seattle 4, Toronto 3

Wednesday's games
 L.A. Angels 9, Cleveland 3
 Seattle 3, Toronto 2
 Baltimore 7, Kansas City 3
 N.Y. Yankees 6, Tampa Bay 2
 Oakland 8, Boston 6
 Detroit 13, Texas 5
 Minnesota 3, Chicago White Sox 2

Thursday's games
 Baltimore 7, Kansas City 3
 Boston 8, Oakland 5
 N.Y. Yankees at Chicago White Sox
 Seattle at Toronto

Friday's games
 Boston (Smoltz 1-4) at Baltimore (Guthrie 7-9)
 Detroit (E.Jackson 7-5) at Cleveland (Sowers 3-7)
 Kansas City (Ponson 1-6) at Tampa Bay (Price 3-4)
 Seattle (J.Vargas 3-4) at Texas (Padilla 7-5)
 L.A. Angels (E.Santana 3-6) at Minnesota (Blackburn 8-5)
 N.Y. Yankees (Mitre 1-0) at Chicago White Sox (Richard 4-3)
 Toronto (Richmond 6-5) at Oakland (Brandon 7-9)

Saturday's games
 N.Y. Yankees at Chicago White Sox
 Kansas City at Tampa Bay
 Detroit at Cleveland
 Boston at Baltimore
 L.A. Angels at Minnesota
 Seattle at Texas
 Toronto at Oakland

Wednesday Angels 9, Indians 3

Cleveland	ab	r	h	bi	Los Angeles	ab	r	h	bi			
Sizemr cf	4	0	0	0	Figgins 3b	3	1	1	0			
ACarer ss	5	0	0	0	B.Wood 3b	1	0	0	0			
Choor rf	2	1	1	0	Mltzurs ss	4	2	1	0			
VMrtzn lb	3	0	1	0	Bareu rf	4	2	2	1			
JhPerit 3b	3	0	0	1	JRiver dh	4	2	1	0			
Hafner dh	3	1	0	0	KMoris lb	4	1	2	2			
Gimenz lf	3	0	0	0	HKndrc 2b	4	1	3	5			
Valuen 2b	3	1	0	0	Mthws Jcf	3	0	0	0			
Shppch c	3	0	2	2	Jlmaths c	3	0	0	0			
Totals	29	3	4	3	Willits lf	4	0	0	0			
Cleveland	000	100	002	—3	Cleveland	000	100	002	—3			
Los Angeles	200	050	20X	—9	Los Angeles	200	050	20X	—9			
E—Choo (5), Valbuena (6), DP—Cleveland (1), Los Angeles 1, LOB—Cleveland 8, Los Angeles 4, 2B—Choo (22), Shoppach (10), K.Morales (28), HR—H.Kendrick (6), SB—Choo (15), CS—Figgins (11), SF—Jh.Peralta.												
Cleveland	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Laffey L4-3	4	7	7	6	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	1
C.Perez	2	1	0	0	1	2	2	1	0	0	0	1
Sipp	1	2	2	2	0	2	0	2	2	2	0	2
Ohka	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	2

Los Angeles
 Lackey W7-4
 Oliver
 Mosbach
 Loux
 Laffey pitched to 5 batters in the 5th.
 HBP—by Lackey (Choo, V.Martinez).
 WP—Mosbach. PB—Shoppach 2. T—2:52. A—39,196 (45,257).

Athletics 8, Red Sox 6

Oakland	ab	r	h	bi	Boston	ab	r	h	bi
Kennedy 3b	5	1	2	1	Ellsury cf	4	3	2	0
OCarerr ss	5	1	1	0	Pedroia 2b	5	0	2	1
KSuzuk c	5	2	2	1	Yokuils 3b	4	1	0	0
Custn dh	1	1	1	0	Bay lf	4	1	0	0
RSwmy rf	1	1	1	0	Lowe dh	3	2	5	2
Everdy lb	3	1	0	0	Kottars pr	0	0	0	0
Crosby lb	0	0	0	0	Baldelli rf	3	0	1	0
M.Ellis 2b	5	1	1	0	J.Drew ph-rf	2	0	1	0
RDavis cf	3	1	1	3	AdLrc lb	4	0	0	0
EPtrns lf	4	0	1	2	Varitek c	3	0	0	0

Oakland
 Bre.Anderson W6-8
 Wuertz
 Ziegler
 J.Crowd H9
 A.Bailey S,13-17
 Boston
 Penny L7-5
 Masterson
 Saito
 R.Ramirez
 Penny pitched to 1 batter in the 6th.
 T—3:18. A—38,193 (37,373).

Mariners 3, Blue Jays 2

Toronto	ab	r	h	bi	Seattle	ab	r	h	bi
Scutaro ss	4	0	0	0	ISuzuki rf	4	1	2	0
A.Hill 2b	3	1	1	0	FGtrrz cf	4	0	0	0
Lind dh	4	1	1	2	JoLopz 2b	4	1	3	1
Rolen 3b	4	0	0	0	GrJfyr dh	4	0	2	2
Rios rf	4	0	1	0	Shelton lb	4	0	1	0
W.Wells cf	3	0	0	0	Johjim c	3	0	0	0
Millar lb	2	0	0	0	Hannhn 3b	4	0	1	0
Barajs c	3	0	0	0	Wdwsr dh	4	0	1	0
Bautist lf	3	0	0	0	M.Sndrs lf	4	1	1	0
Totals	30	2	3	2	Totals	35	3	11	3
Toronto	000	000	200	—2	Seattle	000	010	200	—3
E—Millar (2), LOB—Toronto 3, Seattle 9, 2B—Jo.Lopez (24), Griffey Jr. 2 (14), HR—Lind (21), Jo.Lopez (13).									

Seattle
 Halladay L,11-4
 League
 Rowland-Smith W,1-7
 L.Mowe H,17
 A.Smds 5,25-27
 HBP—by Halladay (Johjim), by Rowland-Smith (Millar). T—2:14. A—32,649 (47,878).

Yankees 6, Rays 2

New York	ab	r	h	bi	Tampa Bay	ab	r	h	bi		
Jeter ss	5	1	2	0	Bupton cf	4	0	0	0		
Damon lf	4	0	0	0	Cwfrd lf	4	1	2	0		
Teixeir 1b	3	1	2	2	Longori 3b	4	1	1	2		
ARdrgz 3b	5	1	1	0	Zobrist 2b	4	0	0	0		
H.Matsu dh	4	0	2	0	C.Pena 1b	3	0	1	0		
Ransm pr-dh	0	1	0	0	Burrell dh	0	0	0	0		
Posada c	4	0	1	1	Gross rf	2	0	0	0		
Cano 2b	4	1	1	2	Navarr c	2	0	0	0		
Swisher rf	3	0	1	0	W.Hayr ph	1	0	0	0		
McCarr cf	4	1	2	1	MHRnd c	1	0	0	0		
Totals	36	6	12	6	Bartlett ss	3	0	2	0		
New York	100	101	012	—6	Tampa Bay	000	000	002	—2		
E—Bartlett (10), DP—Tampa Bay 3, LOB—New York 7, Tampa Bay 6, 2B—H.Matsui (17), C.Pena (20), 3B—Jeter (1), Crawford (5), HR—Teixeira (26), Cano (16), McCabera (9), Longoria (21), CS—Bartlett (3).											
IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

New York
 Chamberlain W,7-2
 Bruney
 Ma.Rivera
 Tampa Bay
 Garza L,7-8
 Shouse
 Cormier
 Wheeler
 Shouse pitched to 1 batter in the 8th.
 HBP—by Garza (Teixeira). T—2:50. A—32,398 (36,973).

Tigers 13, Rangers 5

Detroit	ab	r	h	bi	Texas	ab	r	h	bi		
Grndrs cf	5	2	2	3	Vizquel 2b	5	0	2	1		
Polanc 2b	6	2	2	0	MYong 3b	3	0	1	2		
CGuilln dh	3	2	1	2	Arias 3b	1	0	0	0		
McCar 1b	6	1	4	4	DvMpr lf	3	0	0	0		
Ordonz rf	4	0	0	0	Byrd cf	4	0	0	0		
Inge 3b	1	0	0	0	Blalock 1b	4	0	0	0		
Thams lf	3	2	2	1	Anjns dh	4	2	2	2		
Thoms lf-rf	2	1	1	0	Hamlin rf	4	1	1	0		
Raburn 3b-lf	6	1	3	1	Tegrdn c	4	0	0	0		
Laird c	5	1	1	0	Andrus ss	4	1	2	0		
Everett ss	4	1	3	2							
Totals	45	13	19	13	Totals	36	8	5	5		
Detroit					132	11	400	—13			
Texas					010	030	001	—5			
E—Raburn (5), Andrus (13), DP—Texas 1, LOB—Detroit 13, Texas 5, 2B—Polanco (2), M.Cabrera (22), Thames (6), Laird (15), M.Young (31), HR—Granderson (2), M.Cabrera (20), Thames (11), An.Jones (17), SB—Laird (2), SF—Everett.											
IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

Detroit
 Lander W,12-5
 Lyon
 Fien
 Texas
 Feldman L,9-4
 Moscoso
 Guardado
 Jennings
 O'Day
 HBP—by Guardado (C.Guillen), by Moscoso (Laird). WP—Moscoso. PB—Teagarden. T—3:05. A—33,235 (49,170).

Orioles 7, Royals 3

Kansas City					Baltimore						
	ab	r	h	bi		ab	r	h	bi		
DeJesse lf	4	0	1	0	BRorts 2b	3	3	2	3		
Blmstr rf	4	0	2	0	ADjorts cf	5	2	2	3		
Butler 1b	4	0	0	0	Markks rf	5	0	3	3		
Teahen 3b	4	0	0	0	A.Huff dh	5	0	1	1		
Callasp 2b	4	1	2	1	Reimld lf	3	0	0	0		
Cajabs dh	4	1	1	1	Wggnth 1b	4	0	1	0		
Olivo c	4	1	1	0	Mora 3b	3	0	0	0		
Maier cf	3	0	2	0	Zaun c	3	1	0	0		
YBtrnt ss	3	0	0	0	CLturs ss	3	1	1	0		
Totals	34	3	9	3	Totals	34	7	10	7		
Kansas City	020	100	000	—3	Baltimore	200	000	32X	—7		
DP—Baltimore 1, LOB—Kansas City 5, Baltimore 10, 2B—Maier (2), Ad.Jones (19), Markakis (31), HR—Callasp (7), Jacobs (14), Olivo (14), Ad.Jones (17), CS—Bloomquist (3).											
IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO

Kansas City
 Greinke
 TaLeda L,1-1
 Beale B,5-4
 J.Crowd H9
 Mahay
 Baltimore
 Tillman
 Albers W,2-4
 J.Johnson S,2-5
 Tejada pitched to 2 batters in the 7th.
 HBP—by Greinke (Mora, B.Roberts). T—3:13. A—19,741 (48,290).

Twins 3, White Sox 2

Chicago	ab	r	h	bi	Minnesota	ab	r	h	bi
Pdsndk cf	4	0	0	0	Span lf	3	0	2	1
Bckhm 3b	4	0	2	0	Mauer c	3	0	0	0
Dyer rf	4	0	0	0	Mornea lb	4	0	0	0
Konerk dh	2	0	0	0	Kubel dh	3	0	1	0
Wise pr	0	0	0	0	Cuddy rf	4	0	0	0
ALRMz ss	3	0	2	0	Crede 3b	3	1	0	0
Getz 2b	1	0	0	0	Gomez cf	3	1	1	0
Kotsay lb	4	0	0	0	Punto ss	3	1	0	0
Quentin lf	3	1	1	1	ACasill 2b	3	0	2	2
J.Nix 2b-ss	3	1	1	1					
RCast c	2	0	0	0					
Przyns ph-c	1	0	0	0					

Chicago
 Contreras L,4-10
 Williams
 T.Pena
 Minnesota
 Duensing
 Crain W,3-4
 Guernier H,22
 Nathan S,29-32
 WP—Nathan. T—2:34. A—39,002 (46,632).

National League

East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	58	41	.586	—
Florida	53	48	.525	6
Atlanta	51	50	.505	8
New York	49	51	.490	9½
Washington	32	70	.314	27½
Central Division				
Chicago	54	46	.540	—
St. Louis	56	48	.538	—
Houston	51	51	.500	4
Milwaukee	51	51	.500	4
Cincinnati	45	56	.446	9½
Pittsburgh	43	58	.426	11½
West Division				
Los Angeles	62	39	.614	—
San Francisco	55	46	.545	7
Colorado	54	47	.535	8
Arizona	44	58	.431	18½
San Diego	41	62	.398	22

NL roundup

Santana on the Rocks

Mets ace fires zeroes in first start vs. Colorado

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Johan Santana threw seven innings Thursday as the streaking New York Mets won their fifth straight game, beating the Colorado Rockies 7-0 in the opener of a day-night doubleheader.

Santana (12-8) struck out eight and walked one in his first career outing against Colorado, allowing just four hits. The two-time Cy Young winner closed out July with a 3-2 record and a sparkling 1.82 ERA in five starts.

Angel Berroa had a two-run double in New York's five-run second. The Mets have scored five or more runs in just six of Santana's 21 starts this season.

The Rockies have lost three straight and haven't scored since Clint Barmes' solo homer in the fifth inning of Monday night's 7-3 loss in the series opener.

Jason Hammel (5-6) lasted just 1 1/3 innings. He gave up five runs and seven hits in his shortest outing of the season.

Hammel allowed the first five batters to reach in the second. Cory Sullivan and Omir Santos singled in runs and both scored on Berroa's double. Berroa moved to third when center fielder Dexter Fowler mishandled the ball and scored on Angel Pagan's single.

Padres 7, Reds 4: Rookie Will Venable hit a three-run homer to help Tim Stauffer earn his first victory in almost three years. Venable drove in a career-high four runs and had four hits as the Padres picked up a third consecutive victory. He only had five RBIs in 38 games coming in.

Luis Rodriguez and Chase Headley each added two hits behind Stauffer (1-2), who allowed seven hits and one run in seven innings for his first victory since beating Los Angeles 4-2 on Aug. 21, 2006.

Adam Rosales hit a three-run pinch-hit homer in the ninth for the Reds, who have lost 11 of 14 since the All-Star break.

Brewers 7, Nationals 3: Yovani Gallardo struck out 11 in seven innings, Prince Fielder hit his 25th homer and Craig Counsell added a homer and three RBIs as the Brewers won consecutive games for the first time in July. Gallardo (10-7) scattered five hits and a walk. He allowed a three-run homer to Ryan Zimmerman in the fourth that made it 3-2.

Cubs 12, Astros 3: Kevin Hart (3-1) won his third straight start, and Jake Fox and Milton Bradley hit back-to-back homers as the Cubs rolled to their 11th victory in 14 games.

Kosuke Fukudome reached

base five times and drove in four runs and Ryan Theriot had four RBIs as the Cubs moved 2 percentage points ahead of St. Louis in the NL Central.

Hart, in only his fourth major league start, allowed six hits and three runs in six innings.

In Wednesday games:
Cardinals 3, Dodgers 2 (15): Albert Pujols lined an RBI single over the head of center fielder Matt Kemp with two outs in the 15th as St. Louis extended Los Angeles' losing streak to four games. The NL West leaders were the last team in the majors to lose three straight and were one strike from ending that skid in regulation. But St. Louis' Colby Rasmus singled in the tying run, forcing extra innings.

Both teams scored in the 11th, the Dodgers getting to closer Ryan Franklin for two hits and a sacrifice fly by Kemp and the Cardinals answering on Ryan Ludwick's one-out RBI single.

Padres 7, Reds 1: Rookie Mat Latos (2-1) and relievers Greg Burke and Mike Ekstrom combined on a one-hitter as visiting San Diego won consecutive games for the first time in a month.

Adrian Gonzalez and Kyle Blanks homered off Aaron Harang (5-12).

Marlins 6, Braves 3: Josh



KATHY WILLENS/AP

Johan Santana threw seven innings Thursday to pace New York to a 7-0 victory over Colorado. It was the Mets' fifth straight victory.

Johnson (10-2) limited Atlanta to eight hits and three runs in six innings and contributed a three-run homer as host Florida won its seventh in eight games.

Johnson's shot with two outs in the fourth off Kenshin Kawakami (5-8) was the second homer of his career.

Diamondbacks 4, Phillies 0: Justin Upton homered and drove in three runs and Chris Snyder added a solo shot for host Arizona. Journeyman Yusmeiro Petit (1-5) matched a career high with eight strikeouts and won for the first time since Aug. 23, 2008, a span of 11 starts.

Giants 1, Pirates 0 (10): Randy Winn lined an RBI single down the first-base line with two outs in the 10th as host San Francisco completed a three-game sweep. Matt Cain allowed three hits over nine innings for the Giants and Brian Wilson (3-4) worked the 10th for the victory.

Brewers 7, Nationals 5: Casey McGehee's two-run, pinch-hit homer with two outs in the sixth gave host Milwaukee a 6-5 lead.

Mike Cameron homered for the Brewers, and Ryan Braun had a homer overturned by a replay review. Trevor Hoffman pitched the ninth for his 33rd save.

AL roundup

Ortiz hits big homer hours after drug report

The Associated Press

BOSTON — Hours after he was linked to a positive drug test, David Ortiz hit a go-ahead homer in the seventh inning and the Boston Red Sox rallied to beat the Oakland Athletics 8-5 on Thursday.

With two runners aboard, Ortiz hit a two-out pitch from Craig Breslow (4-5) to right-center, giving Boston a 6-5 lead. The drive sailed over the Red Sox bullpen and to the right of the 420 foot sign that marks the deepest part of Fenway Park.

The New York Times reported just before the game that Ortiz was on the list of more than 100 major leaguers who tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs in 2003.

Ortiz, struggling through a slump that sent him to the bench earlier this season, declined to comment to the newspaper. Red Sox owner John Henry did not immediately respond to an e-mail from The Associated Press seeking comment.

Fans might not have known about the report; if they did, they did not hold back their support. Ortiz was cheered before each at-bat, as always. But it was only after the slumping slugger, who

hit 142 homers from 2004-06, hit his 14th of this season that the fans rose to their feet and hollered until Ortiz came out of the dugout for a curtain call.

Manny Delcarmen (3-2) got four outs for the victory, Daniel Bard pitched a perfect eighth and Jonathan Papelbon worked the ninth for his 26th save.

Boston had won two straight games to Oakland and eight of its last 11 overall.

Orioles 7, Royals 3: Rookie Brad Bergesen (7-5) allowed one run in seven innings, then hobbled off the mound after being hit with a line drive. Bergesen (7-5) was struck in the leg by a sharp grounder off the bat of Billy Butler. Catcher Matt Wieters picked up the loose ball and threw out Butler to end the inning.

Bergesen, who had been knocked flat on the dirt, limped toward the dugout, threw down his glove and headed toward the clubhouse. An X-ray revealed no apparent damage.

Ty Wigginton homered and Aubrey Huff hit a three-run double for the Orioles, who dropped nine of 11 before winning the final two games of the series.

In Wednesday games:

Tigers 13, Rangers 5: Curtis

Granderson led off the game with a home run off Scott Feldman (9-4) and connected again in the second inning for visiting Detroit. The Tigers scored in each of the first seven innings and matched a season high with 19 hits.

Miguel Cabrera, who had four hits and four RBIs, and Marcus Thames homered for Detroit, and Andruw Jones homered twice for Texas.

Justin Verlander (12-5) tied for the major league lead in victories. He boosted his AL-leading strikeout total to 172 in pitching seven innings.

Yankees 6, Rays 2: At St. Petersburg, Fla., Joba Chamberlain (7-2) pitched eight scoreless innings, and Mark Teixeira and Robinson Cano homered and drove in two runs apiece as the Yankees improved to 11-2 since the All-Star break.

Chamberlain (7-2) limited the Rays to three singles, struck out five and walked two.

Teixeira and Melky Cabrera hit solo homers in the eighth.

Athletics 8, Red Sox 6: At Boston, Adam Kennedy homered on the first pitch of the game as Oakland again outslugged Boston to win a day after beating the Red Sox with 21 hits. Brett Anderson

(6-8) was staked to a 5-0 lead before taking the mound and won at Fenway Park for the second time in 23 days. He beat the Red Sox 6-0 with a two-hitter on July 6.

Anderson had only one bad inning Wednesday when he gave up a three-run homer in the first to Mike Lowell, who had five RBIs. He allowed two singles in his five other innings.

Twins 3, White Sox 2: Lighthitting Alexi Casilla had two RBIs and host Minnesota's bullpen pitched four scoreless innings for a three-game sweep of Chicago. Casilla, who entered the game hitting .161, broke a 2-2 tie with a run-scoring single in the sixth as the Twins beat the White Sox for the sixth time in seven games. Minnesota has won four in a row overall.

Joe Crede walked to lead off the inning, moved to second on a sacrifice and scored on Casilla's two-out single off Jose Contreras (4-10), who lost his third in a row.

Orioles 7, Royals 3: Adam Jones homered and drove in three runs and Nick Markakis had three RBIs as host Baltimore downed Kansas City.

After Kansas City starter Zach Greinke pitched six innings of five-hit ball and left with a 3-2

lead, the Orioles went ahead with a three-run seventh that kept the Royals' ace winless in July.

Robinson Tejada (1-1) followed Greinke and walked the first two batters in the seventh. Jones then doubled in a run off John Bale, and Markakis followed with a line-drive single that easily cleared the drawn-in infield.

Markakis and Aubrey Huff added RBI singles in the eighth.

Mariners 3, Blue Jays 2: Ken Griffey Jr. doubled twice and drove in the decisive runs in the seventh inning as host Seattle tagged Roy Halladay with a season-high 11 hits in beating Toronto. The Mariners got a solo homer from ailing Jose Lopez, then loaded the bases on three singles in the seventh against Halladay (11-4).

Adam Lind homered to give Toronto a 2-1 lead in the seventh.

Angels 9, Indians 3: At Anaheim, Calif., Howie Kendrick homered and drove in a career-high five runs. John Lackey (7-4) won a matchup against Aaron Laffey, giving up a run and three hits in seven innings. Lackey is 4-0 with a 1.47 ERA in his past four starts. Laffey (4-3) gave up seven runs and seven hits in four-plus innings.

SPORTS



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MLB: WORLD SERIES CHAMPS RAMP UP THEIR ROTATION

REACTION

Phillies excited to land Cliff Lee

By DAVID MURPHY

Philadelphia Daily News

PHOENIX — They arrived around 3:30 p.m. EDT as conquering heroes from another land. As general manager Ruben Amaro Jr. and his inner circle walked into the visiting clubhouse at Chase Field, several players broke out in mock applause. Assistant GM Scott Proefrock walked into Charlie Manuel's office and shook the manager's hand.

Later, Proefrock and team media relations director Greg Casterioto exchanged a fist bump.

"It's going to be a lot of fun to watch this team play over the next two months," closer Brad Lidge said, his voice garnished with a pinch of disbelief.

If there was any doubting the enormity of the trade Amaro and the Philadelphia Phillies completed Wednesday, landing 2008 American League Cy Young winner Cliff Lee and solid right-handed hitter Ben Francisco for a package of prospects headlined by pitchers Jason Knapp and Carlos Carrasco, the proof was in the giddy scene that unfolded in and around the clubhouse.

All week, players had followed the various developments that played out in the media — some true, many exaggerated or false — as the Phillies sought to add a top-flight starter to a rotation that had played a major role in their winning 19 of 22 games.

For all but the previous 24 hours, the scuttlebutt had the Phillies angling for Toronto Blue Jays ace Roy Halladay.

The Phillies coveted Halladay and worked hard to land him, but an up-and-down negotiating process eventually left them leaning toward other options.

Although Lee, 30, does not have the track record of Halladay, a

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JOHN FROSCHAUER/AP

The Philadelphia Phillies, who had been pursuing Toronto Blue Jays pitcher Roy Halladay but dropped out because the price was too high, acquired Cliff Lee from the Cleveland Indians on Wednesday. Lee, the reigning AL Cy Young winner, was 7-9 in 22 starts for the Indians this season, but was in the top 10 among AL starters in ERA (3.14, 7th), innings (152, 1st), and fewest home runs allowed (10, T-6th).

COMMENTARY

Indians' return for ace too little

By PATRICK McMANAMON
Akron Beacon Journal

A friend was chatting on his cell phone Wednesday afternoon when his home phone rang (technology).

He picked up the home phone, chatted for a minute and came back on the line.

"It was my wife," he said. "She said to tell the Indians to shove it up their rear end."

There's no need to do that, really.

It's a bit unseemly, and there's plenty of other folks taking care of it.

The trade of Cliff Lee to the Philadelphia Phillies did not and will not play well on the North Coast. Because the trade doesn't smell right, look right or feel right.

Two years in a row now the Indians have dealt the reigning Cy Young winner. (The only reason they didn't trade the MVP is they don't have him.)

Last year they traded the Cy Young winner for guys who have made cameo appearances in the major leagues.

This year they traded the Cy Young winner for four prospects. None is major-league ready.

Twice they traded the best pitcher in the American League for guys who have potential.

It used to be that potential got guys fired.

Potential now makes the Pittsburgh Pirates into a farm team for the Boston Red Sox and the Indians into a farm team for anyone on the East Coast.

This is back to the days of trading Graig Nettles and acquiring Charlie Spikes, the Bogalusa Bomber.

But that's where the Indians are as they absorb the brunt impact of a sputtering Ohio economy and a bad season.

Payroll is based on revenue. Revenue is dependent on attendance and merchandising and sponsorships. Attendance and merchandising and sponsorships

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Death of ex-boxing champ Gatti ruled suicide Page 36

